

Desolate Era

(莽荒纪)

Book 15

The Sword Eradicates Celestial Immortals

I Eat Tomatoes

(我吃西红柿)

Story Description:

Fate had never been kind to Ji Ning. Wracked by illnesses and infirm his entire life on Earth, Ning knew early on that he would die as a teenager. What he didn't know was that there really was such a thing as life after death, and that the multiverse was a far larger place than he thought. A lucky twist of fate (one of the few in Ning's life) meant that Ning was reborn into a world of Immortals and monsters, of Ki Refiners and powerful Fiendgods, a world where Dynasties lasted for millions of years. A world which is both greater...and yet also smaller...than he ever could imagine. He would have the opportunity to join them, and in this life, Ning swore to himself, he would never let himself be weak again! The Era he was born into was a Desolate one, but Ning would make it his era.

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

Chapter 1: The Full Story

The pain and despair that he had suppressed for so many years all came howling out with his cries. Slowly, Mu Northson regained his faculties and let go of Ji Ning. “Senior apprentice-brother, I’m fine now. I wasn’t able to control myself just now; I made a fool of myself in front of you.”

“We’re brothers; why say such things?” Ning looked towards Northson. “Junior apprentice-brother, tell me – what happened?!”

“Nothing.” Northson shook his head. “What was to happen already has.”

Northson looked at Ning. “Senior apprentice-brother, how did you get here? This is a forbidden region that is tightly guarded; not even Celestial Immortals can barge their way inside.”

Ning looked at his tired, downtrodden junior apprentice-brother. He felt pain in his heart; at a time like this, his junior apprentice-brother was actually refusing to say anything. Ning immediately said, “I know this is a forbidden region. I also know...that this is the Flamedoor Commandery’s Eastwoods mountain range. Given my abilities, if I want to enter this place, no one will be able to find out. Junior apprentice-brother, tell me...what has happened?!”

“No need to ask.” Northson shook his head.

“If I was faced with this situation, wouldn’t you ask?” Ning rebutted.

Northson was startled. It was true. They were like brothers; if Ning was in such a dire situation, Northson wouldn’t be able to ignore it.

“Tell me,” Ning said earnestly.

“Senior apprentice-brother.” Northson looked at Ning. “Telling you would be harming you. I’ve already been damned; I don’t want you to be damned as well.”

Ning understood that this must certainly involve an important matter; the number of Loose Immortals around that castle was enough to tell Ning that the amount of power that had been gathered here in the

Eastwoods mountain range alone was on the same level as the power available to the Northmont clan of Stillwater; in fact, it might even be greater. As for the great power behind this place...

"Junior apprentice-brother, don't underestimate me. You know very well that this is a forbidden region which is not easily entered, but I still managed to make it in. I'm no longer the same person I was," Ning said earnestly. "After the Conclave of Immortal Destiny, I joined a Daofather's school and became the Daofather's disciple."

The Old Patriarch had only forbidden Ning from saying that he was his disciple; so long as Ning didn't say the words 'Patriarch Subhuti', he wouldn't be violating his master's orders.

"What?!" Northson was stunned.

"I've trained for thirty-plus years and my power has increased greatly. I finally managed to obtain permission from Master to return to the Grand Xia." Ning looked at Northson. "Even if I truly do encounter any danger, my master will intervene and rescue me. The world of the Grand Xia currently truly is filled with dangerous undercurrents, and there is even a hidden power that is capable of fighting against the Grand Xia Emperor himself. But if my master was to intervene, he would be able to save my life with utter ease...and thus, there is nothing for you to worry about."

Northson was dazed.

"You don't believe me? Take a look!" Ning waved his hand. Instantly, one top-grade Immortal-ranked flying sword after another appeared, clustered together in a tight pile. Because they all had to be kept within this room, they were all piled on top of one another.

"These..." Northson could sense the power of these top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords.

"You should be capable of recognizing these for what they are by now," Ning said.

"Top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords?" Northson guessed.

"Yes." Ning nodded. "There are a thousand here."

Northson's throat clenched. Even though he was here in this forbidden region where he had seen a fraction of the true strength of this mysterious power...he was still stunned by Ji Ning! Top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords...every single one of them was extremely valuable. A set of a thousand was utterly inconceivable!

"After I left my master's tutelage, my master gifted them to me." Ning looked at Northson. "In addition, I was able to easily enter this forbidden region. Do you believe me now?"

Northson was beginning to be moved.

"Take a look at this." Ning's body flickered.

Swish. He transformed into another Mu Northson, dressed in the same gray robes, with the same exhausted complexion and some white hairs on his head.

"But, but..." Northson stared in disbelief at Ning. "Even the aura is absolutely identical...even the amount of karmic virtue is the same! This cannot be!"

"Why can't it be? Change again!"

Ning then transformed into Immortal Fivecraze, then into the Fiendgod Xiangliu Fang, then into Youngflame Nong, then into Celestial Immortal King Yan...

He quickly transformed into more than ten figures the two both recognized before changing back into his normal appearance.

"Are you still worried about me?" Ning looked at Northson.

"I believe you when you say that you took on a Daofather as your master. I've never even heard of a transformation ability like this one." Northson nodded, then said in a low voice, "I know that you, senior apprentice-brother, definitely wish to understand everything which happened. Fine...I'll talk."

Ning let out a sigh of relief.

Northson sat down. "We still have slightly less than an hour...so I'll

start from when I met Yu Xia. Years ago, in Stillwater City, I met Yu Xia. She was a disciple of the Thousand Rivers Sect, but was filled with curiosity towards the Dao of Constructs. But naturally, her ability in the Dao of Constructs was far inferior to mine.”

After the death of his master, Northson could be considered the number one expert in the Dao of Constructs within the Black-White College! This was because there were very few people within the College who trained in this Dao, and also because he truly did have a high amount of talent within this Dao.

“Yu Xia would often ask me for guidance, and I’d give her advice.” A hint of a smile appeared on Northson’s face. “After a long time...the two of us ended up together, becoming Dao-companions. Those were the happiest days of my life; I felt carefree and without any worries. Alongside my Dao-companion, I continued to study the Dao of Formations in a content, relaxed manner.”

“Yu Xia and I lived in an out-of-the-way place, atop a wild prairie. We built a house next to a lake, and we lived a peaceful life there.”

“I wish so deeply...”

“...to have been able to live there forever.”

Northson shut his eyes. “But then...that day came. A group of black-robed men arrived, all of them Loose Immortals, and formidable ones at that. Yu Xia was merely a Wanxiang Adept, while I had just broken through to become a Primal Daoist. The two of us were completely unable to fight back.”

“I was captured. Yu Xia was killed. After she died, her soul wasn’t permitted to be reborn; rather, it was captured as well.”

Ning’s pupils shrank.

Even after Yu Xia died, her soul had still been captured?

“I was brought here,” Northson said. “Brought here, to this forbidden region. The people in this region ordered me to help them build constructs.”

“Build constructs?” Ning instantly understood. “Those other gray-robed figures...they were also brought here because they were skilled in the Dao of Constructs?”

“Right. There are more than one hundred grandmasters of the Dao of Constructs in this area,” Northson said. “They’ve all been brought here. I suspect that the Eastwoods mountain range is a gathering point for the mysterious power behind this place, for more than a hundred nearby commanderies.”

Ning frowned. “One of the gathering points? You know of other gathering points?”

“I have some guesses,” Northson said. “During these years, I’ve seen seven generals come to this place. ‘General’ is a fairly high rank here, and all of them were at the Celestial Immortal level. The Eastwoods mountain range has a general who is permanently stationed here, but on multiple occasions there have been other generals who escorted deliveries of treasures to this place. In total, I’ve seen twelve different generals!”

Ning was secretly startled.

Twelve Celestial Immortals? And this was just the tip of the iceberg!

“They are asking you to create constructs?” Ning asked. “What sort of construct?”

“An extremely large one.” A look of disbelief was in Northson’s eyes. “This power has an extremely deep level of understanding regarding the Dao of Constructs; their understanding, compared to the secret arts recorded down within our Black-White College regarding the Dao of Constructs, must be billions or even trillions of times greater!”

Ning was rather stunned upon hearing this.

Billions? Trillions?! This was too insane.

“Don’t think I’m just talking,” Northson immediately said. “I feel that I am an extremely talented person with regards to the Dao of Constructs, but when I first came, they taught me some construct-creation methods that they felt were fairly low-level. When creating the constructs, I was

inspired by the mysteries and profoundness of them, causing my level of insight into the Dao of Constructs to rapidly increase.”

“As my level of insight increased, they began to let me create increasingly more powerful constructs. They also bestowed liquefied elemental essence upon me, allowing me to reach the Void level and become an Earth Immortal.”

“Now, within this forbidden region, I can be ranked amongst the top hundred grandmasters of the Dao of Constructs,” Northson said. “Right now, the other grandmasters and myself are currently working together to forge an incomparably massive construct. It should be the most powerful Fiendgod Golem this forbidden region is producing.”

“Grandmaster of the Dao of Constructs?” Ning could hardly believe it. His junior apprentice-brother had advanced so quickly?

“Senior apprentice-brother...you have no idea what life here has been like,” Northson said. “They squeeze every single drop of usable energy out of you, forcing you to go all out to construct new constructs! But every single powerful construct expands our horizons as well. As for the most powerful Fiendgod Golem we are currently creating...that’s even more terrifying.”

“How terrifying?” Ning asked.

“Below the level of True Immortals or Empyrean Gods...it is all but invincible,” Northson said seriously. “If a Celestial Immortal was controlling it, not even ten or a hundred Celestial Immortals fighting together would be able to stop it.”

Ning was incomparably shocked.

“Don’t be so shocked. The slightly weaker golems which the other grandmasters and myself have been constructing, when controlled by Loose Immortals, all have the combat power of Celestial Immortals.” Northson sighed, “You have no idea what a deep level of understanding of the Dao of Constructs this organization has. Those construct formation-diagrams are incomparably profound; in terms of better understanding the Dao of Constructs, every single diagram is like a supreme treasure to

us. And here, I've already seen more than a thousand such construct formation-diagrams..."

Ning nodded gently. "So this forbidden region is being used to produce constructs...but can it be that everyone is just willing to work here?"

"How can we be 'willing'?" Northson said with grief, "Nobody is 'willing'. Creating these top-tier golems is extremely difficult, and it uses up a tremendous amount of our mental energy. And yet, we are still having the life squeezed out of us; the amount of time for rest we have been given is growing less and less."

"We all hate them for kidnapping us, and in fact many wish to die. I originally wanted to die as well."

"But...Yu Xia's soul is in their hands," Northson said. "If I diligently work to create golems, I can go visit her once a month and speak with her. But if I dare to commit suicide...once I die, they will torment her soul for thousands on thousands of years, never giving her a chance to be reborn."

Ning couldn't help but shiver. Never be given the chance to be reborn?

"I do not dare kill myself." Northson laughed bitterly. "Their general, however, has voluntarily sworn an oath to the Dao of the Heavens that if we stay here and peacefully build these constructs, within a thousand years we will be granted our freedom, and the soul of our loved one will be released as well."

Freedom?

A thousand years?

Ning understood now. In one hand, a big stick; in the other hand, a carrot. Although the people here were being tormented and exhausted, they still saw hope, and so they were able to endure.

Chapter 2: The Rescue Plan

Ji Ning now knew about all the twists and turns that had led to the current situation. He immediately said, “Junior apprentice-brother, I’ll come up with a way to save your Dao-companion’s soul, then lead you away.”

Although his heart was filled with a desire for murder, Ning knew very well that the truly important thing was to rescue his junior apprentice-brother and the soul of Yu Xia.

“It’s useless.” Mu Northson shook his head. “There’s no way I can leave the forbidden region.”

“Why?!” Ning hurriedly asked.

“This mysterious power seems to be worried that we might have a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal hidden within our Zifu region; without killing us, there’s no way they can find out,” Northson said. “To prevent us from escaping, when they caught us, they forced us to swear oaths to the Dao of the Heavens that unless they voluntarily grant us freedom, if we are to flee this place and go beyond the confines of the Eastwoods mountain range, we shall have our souls shattered.”

“What?!” Ning was stunned.

This was going to be trouble.

“We only have two paths before us. The first path is the path of death, followed by the souls of our loved ones suffering for countless ages, never to be reborn! The second path is to swear the oath to the Dao of the Heavens, then obediently work hard. Those of us who did not commit suicide...we are all hoping for our final freedom,” Northson said.

Ning nodded lightly.

Aside from the tight watch they maintained, they had also forced Northson and the others to swear oaths to the Dao of the Heavens not to flee. Quite cautious indeed!

“You said...‘unless they voluntarily grant you freedom’?” Ning suddenly

asked.

"Right," Northson said. "After all, the general himself also swore an oath to the Dao of the Heavens to free us within a thousand years. If we are to never be given freedom, many people would likely choose suicide instead."

Ning pondered for a moment, then said, "Right...earlier, you said that you and the other grandmasters are pooling your abilities to create an incomparably terrifying Fiendgod Golem...and that if a Celestial Immortal was to command it, it could be described as invincible against any foes beneath the True Immortal or Empyrean God level! Then the creation of this golem must be very hard, right? The materials are quite precious?"

There were quite a few Celestial Immortals who had Pure Yang treasures. For this Fiendgod Golem to be referred to as 'invincible against any foes beneath the True Immortal or Empyrean God level' had to mean that it was vastly more valuable than any ordinary Pure Yang treasure.

"The creation is indeed quite difficult." Northson nodded. "Although all of us are Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals, and have detailed blueprints, the golem formation-diagrams within...they are simply unfathomably profound. We grandmasters are like a horde of ants, diligently working away at the task. We've spent more than twelve years on it, but we've managed to finish more than half of the Fiendgod Golem. I trust that in two or three more years, we'll have finished it."

"As for the materials? They are naturally of enormous value. This mighty golem has extremely exacting standards when it comes to its materials; weaker materials are completely unable to withstand the power that will be circulated through it via the mighty formation-diagrams. To put it another way...this Fiendgod Golem is the most important task I have been given since I was brought here! All of the grandmasters have joined forces to work on it, while the ordinary golem-masters are merely working on secondary constructs instead."

Ning nodded lightly. "All the grandmasters have joined forces and have

spent twelve years on it? Most of you, when first arriving, must have been at a comparatively low level of skill in the Dao of Constructs. By working on secondary constructs, your skill began to slowly rise to the level of a grandmaster...which is to say, the main purpose this forbidden region has had over the past thirty years was to produce this golem!"

"Right." Northson nodded in agreement. "As for the precious materials, they are escorted here by other generals. One time, seven generals came together in escorting a shipment."

Ning nodded.

Of course that was how it had to be. A construct meant for a Celestial Immortal to control, that was invincible against all other Celestial Immortals. A few dozen or a hundred such Fiendgod Golems would probably be enough to completely sweep through the entire world of the Grand Xia! Ning was now a disciple of Patriarch Subhuti and had a certain level of insight into the world...but golems as terrifying as these probably were superior to even top-grade Pure Yang treasures!

They were truly priceless!

"Since you are here working on this golem, then you definitely will come into contact with it," Ning said.

"Yes." Northson nodded.

"Good. Then I'll make a trip with you...and I'll take away the Fiendgod Golem when the time is right," Ning said confidently. "I'll threaten that 'general' and force him to release you and Yu Xia's soul."

"How would you enter? What will you transform into? That castle is extremely tightly guarded; no living creatures are allowed in, not even mosquitos," Northson said.

"I'll change into..." Ning laughed. "...a hair on your head."

"Hair?"

Northson was speechless.

Ning laughed. Swish! He disappeared into thin air, and then an extra

hair appeared on top of Northson's head.

"What do you think, junior apprentice-brother?" Ning's voice echoed out.

Northson, amazed, reached out with his hand to stroke this additional strand of hair that had just appeared. "You can do this?!"

This was indeed a flawless plan!

Swish.

Ning reappeared.

"If you transform into my hair...there's no way I could recognize you. But is it possible that someone within the castle might detect you?" Northson asked, worried.

"Even True Immortals and Empyrean Gods will be unable to detect me," Ning said confidently. The 'Seventy-Two Transformations' was no ordinary divine ability.

"Good." Northson revealed a look of delight. "The other grandmasters and I are working in a region deep within that castle, where we are forging that Fiendgod Golem. That region is primarily meant for us grandmasters; there are only two guards there. No one else will go there to disturb us. Since there's no way for us to escape, they aren't worried about us at all. So long as you go...you'll be able to easily capture that Fiendgod Golem."

"But senior apprentice-brother!" Northson said with worry. "Once you seize it, everyone in the castle will know right away. In fact, even that general will immediately be aware of it. If you threaten them, they might just kill you, then take the Fiendgod Golem back."

"Kill me?" Ning shook his head. "They won't be able to kill me...so they will have to choose to lower their heads."

All he had to do was enter his mobile Immortal estate for just a brief moment, then immediately use a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal.

The enemies would probably truly be forced to lower their heads!

Northson began to grow excited as well. His senior apprentice-brother's plan was indeed workable. He hurriedly said, "We have to first acquire Yu Xia's soul. I'm not afraid of death, but I'm terrified of the thought that Yu Xia's soul will be tormented for countless ages."

Ning was startled for a moment, then nodded. "Right."

He could threaten them and force them to submit...but they might just pull out Yu Xia's soul to counter-threaten him! His junior apprentice-brother would rather die than cause Yu Xia to be eternally unable to be reborn.

"Are you able to acquire Yu Xia's soul?" Ning asked.

"It's been a month since I've seen Yu Xia," Northson said hurriedly. "After I enter the castle, I can request to see Yu Xia. Each month, we can see our loved one a single time! They won't refuse...they'll take me there, then I'll see Yu Xia. You, senior apprentice-brother, will immediately strike and seize her soul."

"However..."

"Seizing Yu Xia's soul, or seizing the Fiendgod Golem. We have to choose between the two." Northson began to frown.

Ning laughed. "That's simple. I'll first go with you on a trip to the Fiendgod Golem, and then I'll go to Yu Xia's place. I'll acquire her soul, then immediately use a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal to immediately head to the Fiendgod Golem and seize it as well."

"A Greater Teleportation Dao-seal?" Northson said, worried, "But once you move to flee the Eastwoods mountain range...will you have another method of escape?"

"I have a few of these seals," Ning said with a laugh.

He did indeed. He had acquired one from the underwater estate, a second from killing Youngflame Nong, then more than ten from killing the monster kings and the vile Patriarch on the Crescent world. Every one of the monster kings had at least one Greater Teleportation Dao-seal on them; given their statuses, acquiring one wasn't too hard.

And now, given the number of treasures Ning had and his connection with Patriarch Skyfox of the Heavenly Treasures Mountain, it wouldn't be too hard for him to buy eight or ten Greater Teleportation Dao-seals.

"First seize Yu Xia's soul, then Greater Teleport to seize the Fiendgod Golem." Northson asked, "The seizing of the soul will cause alarms to go off within the castle; I imagine that seizing the Fiendgod Golem will prove troublesome."

"Don't worry. As long as we are fast enough, and as long as we immediately Greater Teleport upon acquiring the soul...there will be no one who can stop us," Ning said. "The only person in the entire Eastwoods mountain range who can threaten me is that general you spoke of. By the time he hears of the soul being stolen, I'll have already taken the Fiendgod Golem as well."

The plan had more or less been set. The two of them discussed some of the finer details, then Northson began to give a introduction to the layout of the castle.

Just as the two grew more and more animated in their discussions...

Northson's face suddenly turned ashen.

"Senior apprentice-brother!" Northson looked towards Ning with worry. "If you steal Yu Xia's soul, then threaten them to force them to release me...they'll definitely suspect there is a connection between us. Given that you'll have to fight when moving to steal the Fiendgod Golem...you'll probably have to use your skills as a Sword Immortal, at which point they'll know it is a Sword Immortal they are facing."

"They would be able to guess right away that the person who rescued me was most likely you, senior apprentice-brother."

"They'll be able to tell it from your swords."

Northson stared at Ning.

Ning sighed mentally to himself.

His junior apprentice-brother had discovered the flaw.

Right...

He had already been trapped within this Eastwoods mountain range once; given the power of that mysterious organization, they probably suspected that he had trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art].

Given that he was then able to enter stealthily, then steal the Fiendgod Golem despite the tight defenses and guard...they would probably grow even more certain that he had used the 'Seventy-Two Transformations'. After all, other methods of entry, such as a Greater Teleportation, would cause spatial ripples and be discovered.

The chances of him being exposed would be very high.

He absolutely could not underestimate this foe. They were far too powerful...Ning knew this all along.

"Junior apprentice-brother," Ning said. "Don't worry. Even if I am exposed in the end...all I'm doing is rescuing you. To this mysterious power, a single grandmaster of constructs isn't that important. You are nothing more than one amongst many such grandmasters. It is the Fiendgod Golem which truly matters. So long as they let you free, I'll return that to them; they won't have lost much. They won't go so far as to make an enemy out of a Daofather's disciple over this matter."

Northson shook his head. "Senior apprentice-brother, your words are reasonable, but I can sense how savage and arrogant that organization is...and they truly are powerful. I don't want them to act against you. I'd rather stay here and endure the thousand years."

"Will you be able to endure it?" Ning snapped frantically, "Look at yourself right now. You'll probably die halfway through it!"

"Enough!" Ning said seriously. "If you disagree, then I'll do it myself, without your help."

"Senior apprentice-brother..." Northson couldn't believe it.

"Decide!" Ning said. "Am I going to do this myself, or are we going to do it together?"

Chapter 3: Class - Winged Immortal

Mu Northson stared at Ji Ning. Finally, he nodded. "Fine. We two brothers shall do it together."

"Hahaha, that's more like it!" Ning laughed, then slapped him on the shoulder.

Northson looked at Ning, then smiled as well. Deep in his heart, however, he firmly engraved the memory of this kindness into his soul.

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The two hours of rest time had concluded.

The gray-robed figures all returned from their various residences. Northson returned as well, his hair still disordered.

"Hurry up."

"All of you, hurry up!"

The black-robed figures were already snapping at them to move faster, but the grandmasters remained calm and silent. They completely ignored the black-robed figures; they were grandmasters of the Dao of Constructs, after all. If they didn't work hard, they might suffer some consequences or punishments, but taking their two-hour rest was ordinary.

"The black-robed figures have very low statuses in this mysterious organization. Those Wanxiang and Primal level black-robed figures are merely Fiendslaves, while the Loose Immortal and Earth Immortal black-robed figures are Fienderfs." Ning had already learned a bit regarding this mysterious organization thanks to Northson's explanations.

Rumble...

A blurry light flowed across the castle. The gray-robed figures passed through it to enter the castle, and Northson entered as well.

Ning's field of vision changed. Within the castle gateway, he saw a bronze-armored man whose aura was clearly much more powerful than the individuals he had seen earlier.

“Bronze-armored guards? Fiendguards? I wonder how many Fiendguards this location has,” Ning mused to himself.

Fiendslaves were at the Wanxiang and Primal level.

Fiendserfs were at the Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal level.

Fiendguards were extremely powerful Loose Immortals; as Ning saw it, most likely each of them was roughly at the power of that vile Patriarch he had killed.

Above them...were the Fiendlords!

The Fiendlords were the ‘generals’, all of them at the Celestial Immortal level.

The corridors within the castle were deep and gloomy. The surrounding area was divided up into numerous large regions, each of which had grandmasters of the Dao of Constructs! Northson, however, continued to walk deeper into the castle.

“Here we are.” At the end of the tunnel, a bronze-armored Fiendguard said with a laugh, “Open up!”

“Yes.”

The nearby black-robed Fiendserf quickly pushed the door open. It rumbled open, then the gray-robed figures entered. As for Ning, in the shape of a strand of hair, he followed Northson in as well.

“Whew.” Northson let out a sigh of relief. “Senior apprentice-brother’s transformation abilities truly are formidable; the castle is protected by layers of formations, but it still wasn’t able to detect him.”

After entering through the gate, they were now in an incomparably enormous stand-alone region.

This region was thirty thousand meters in circumference, and the gray-robed figures were all standing atop clouds, walking around an enormous golem. The area around the golem was filled with many materials, and all of the grandmasters immediately began their fabrication efforts.

“That’s huge.” The hair-Ning stared at the enormous golem. “Although

I heard junior apprentice-brother speak of it...this golem is truly stunning to behold. So when a Celestial Immortal controls it, it is virtually invincible to anyone below the True Immortal or Empyrean God level."

Per what his junior apprentice-brother had said, the most important golem within this forbidden region was referred to as the Fiendgod Golem; it was of the 'Fiendgod' class.

Its body was more than three thousand meters tall. It was pitch-black, and appeared similar to a crab in appearance. It had eight slender, sharp claws, as well as two enormous pincers. Its torso was filled with countless runes that joined together into a formation-diagram that caused Ning to feel dizzy just looking at it. It was simply too complicated.

"How savage. Just by looking at it, I can tell that it was meant for war."

The aura alone which emanated from this massive, black, half-finished, crab-shaped Fiendgod Golem was already superior to that of an ordinary Celestial Immortal's!

"This place has experts in the Dao of Constructs from more than a hundred commanderies," Ning mused to himself. "And this is just a single gathering point...yet it's already able to create such terrifying golems. Based on what junior apprentice-brother said...they are able to produce one in roughly ten to twenty years. Then...across the 3600 commanderies and four seas of the Grand Xia Dynasty...how many gathering points are there?! How many of these golems are they able to produce every century?"

Ning understood, naturally, that things couldn't be calculated in this manner.

After all, the materials required to produce these golems were all extremely expensive. Many grandmasters in the Dao of Constructs alone wouldn't suffice; materials would also be needed.

"This has merely been thirty years. But in the many years before they even came to the world of the Grand Xia?"

Ning couldn't help but feel shock in his heart. This power was simply

unfathomable ! No wonder even Patriarch Subhuti, he who possessed the [Dream of the Three Realms], felt so worried.

Swoosh!

Suddenly, Northson halted his forging, flying towards one of the entrances to this region. There were two black-robed figures standing at the entrance.

“What are you doing? Why aren’t you forging?” One of them barked.

“I wish to see my Dao-companion,” Northson said.

“See your Dao-companion?” The black-robed man frowned.

“I haven’t seen her this month,” Northson said. “I can see her once a month.”

“Fine, fine. What a pain in the ass. Wait a moment, I’ll go inform his lordship,” the black-robed figure said.

Northson just stood there obediently.

Within another region inside the castle. There were a group of gray-robed figures here as well, surrounding an enormous golem. They couldn’t help but stroke the enormous golem in a sad, longing manner. This golem had cost them their blood, sweat, and tears...but now it had been completed, and it was going to be taken away.

Although they wore gray-robés, their statuses were lower than that of Northson and his fellows. They were also more numerous; they were comparatively less skilled in the Dao of Constructs.

“Milord, this ‘Winged Immortal’ class golem has been finished.” There was a red-robed elder standing nearby. One of the black-robed figures made this report respectfully to him.

“Mm.” The red-robed elder revealed a smile. “The forging speed is rather slow. These young fellows from the world of the Grand Xia truly are weak in the Dao of Constructs. It took so many of them so long just to complete a single golem of the ‘Winged Immortal’ class.”

The nearby black-robed figure was secretly speechless.

Slow? You old bastard, you don't even know how to forge constructs, and you have a low status within the sect as well; the only thing you can do is flatter the general, which is why you were given the job of overseeing the construction of these golems. If any of the formal disciples of the sect who actually trained in the Dao of Constructs was to appear, you'd probably immediately kneel down and lick their toes, you old bastard!

"Out of the way!" The red-robed elder walked forward while shouting loudly, and the gray-robed figures quickly retreated.

Smiling merrily, the red-robed elder waved his hand. Instantly, the enormous winged golem, the 'Winged Immortal class golem', was stored into his storage bracelet. "We've finished yet another Winged Immortal class. Heh heh heh...within the sect, my branch in the forbidden region should be ranked amongst the top ten in producing Winged Immortals. Once the Fiendgod-class is completed...we'll most likely all be awarded many gifts."

"Milord, milord." Suddenly, a voice disturbed the red-robed elder's ruminations.

The red-robed elder glanced sideways irritably. Seeing the lowly black-robed figure running towards him, he snapped coldly, "You useless piece of trash...can't you see I'm busy? What's this about, with all the screaming and shouting?"

"Mu Northson wishes to see his Dao-companion," the black-robed figure said hurriedly. In his heart, however, he was cursing at the old bastard.

Fiendslaves, Fiendserfs, Fienguards...

They were ranked according to power.

Strictly speaking, this red-robed elder was merely a Fiendserf. However, he was awarded the red robes as a gift and sent to oversee the creation of constructs in this part of the forbidden region. But in truth, as far as strength went, he was merely on par with the other black-robed figures. Seeing how arrogantly the red-robed elder acted, the black-robed figures naturally felt resentment. All of them hoped for the day when the red-

robed elder fell!

“Mu Northson?” The red-robed elder pursed his lips. “What a pain in the ass. Fine, fine, fine. Let’s go see him.”

There were only so many grandmasters within the castle; he naturally memorized the names of every single grandmaster clearly.

.....

Soon, the red-robed elder saw Northson.

The hair-Ning saw the red-robed Elder as well. Northson had told him long ago that this red-robed elder was a fairly important figure in the forbidden region; his name was Qu Huan, and he was in charge of overseeing those who were fabricating the golems. As far the souls went... it was this red-robed elder who was in charge of hiding them somewhere within the castle.

Northson immediately said, “I wish to see my Dao-companion.”

“Let’s go,” the red-robed elder said irritably. “You all have a chance to see your family once a month; we’ll definitely make it happen. But you have to work hard in your fabrications; if you don’t work hard, then... hmph. You should know what will happen.”

Northson nodded. “I know, I know.”

The red-robed elder walked in front, passing through a wide hall, then entering a slender passageway. Soon, they arrived within a private room.

“Wait here. I’ll be back shortly,” the red-robed elder said.

“Alright.” Northson sat in the lotus position on a prayer mat. This room was very quiet; the only person present was a black-robed guard who was keeping watch on him from the door.

A short while later.

The red-robed elder appeared once more. He walked into the room, then also sat down in the losut position. Snorting coldly, he said, “You only have as much time as needed for a stick of incense to burn down.” He waved his hand, and a glittering jade sphere flew out. There was a

woman's figure within the jade sphere, her form lithe and slender, carrying a hint of sadness within.

"Little Xia," Northson immediately said excitedly.

The woman within the jade globe looked towards him, then immediately said with excitement, "Northson." The voice of the soul, after exiting the jade sphere, actually reverberated within the room, causing the people present to be able to hear it with their ears.

The hair-Ning clucked to himself in surprise.

Generally speaking, souls were unable to speak verbally. It seems that it was the jade sphere that allowed this one to speak...but in turn, Yu Xia's soul was trapped within it.

"It seems as though Yu Xia and junior apprentice-brother truly do have deep love for each other," the hair-Ning observed.

"Northson, I know you are very tired." The woman floated within the jade sphere, saying with worry, "Every time I see you, I feel as though you are even older and more tired than the last time. If you really can't take it any more...then just stop worrying about me."

"Hmph." The nearby red-robed elder snorted coldly. "The two of you really are quite close to each other."

Northson just looked at the woman in the jade sphere. He said hurriedly, "Little Xia, one day, I will bring you out of here. Definitely."

"Right. Work hard in the service of the general. Within a thousand years, you shall definitely be set free," the red-robed elder said.

Northson's eyes were filled with tears as he looked at the woman within the jade sphere. Suddenly, he used his elemental ki to send a mental message to Ning: "Senior apprentice-brother, kill this Qu Huan and grab the soul."

"Fine."

A single hair from Northson's tousled hair suddenly vanished.

Immediately afterwards, a white-robed man appeared out of nowhere.

When the white-robed man appeared, his enormous palm struck out with the full power of the [Starseizing Hand], slamming down on the body of the surprised and terrified red-robed elder.

BOOM.

Instantly, the red-robed elder was instantly transformed into dust. The white-robed figure waved his hand, collecting the jade sphere, the storage bracelet, and magic treasures.

Chapter 4: Those Who Bar Me, Die!

The red-robed elder, Qu Huan, had been instantly slain. The black-robed guard standing at the entrance couldn't help but feel shocked...but in the next instant, a streak of sword-light instantly slashed past him.

"No..." The black-robed figure felt despair. He didn't even have a chance to let out a single cry before the sword-light transformed him into dust.

"Let's go." Ning pulled Mu Northson into his mobile Immortal estate, then immediately used a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal.

Rumble...

Ning disappeared into thin air.

.....

"What just happened?!"

"Why was there such a powerful ripple?" The black-robed figures all noticed it. Although Ning had tried to control his power as best he could, he couldn't completely block it from leaking out; after all, the entire castle was filled with guards who had very acute senses.

And right at this moment...a spatial ripple appeared!

"Teleportation."

"A Greater Spatial Teleportation!" The black-robed figures and bronze-armored Fiendguards all had changed looks on their faces. Although the defenses here in their castle were extremely tight, there was no way they could block out a Greater Spatial Teleportation. However...outsiders knew nothing of the layout within the castle, and so even if they were to use a Greater Teleportation, it would be hard for them to teleport into the castle.

Deep within the castle, within that giant, stand-alone region. The many gray-robed figures here were like ants that were crawling throughout the areas close to the enormous Fiendgod Golem, constantly forging new parts to further perfect it.

Rumble...

Ripples of a spatial teleportation.

All of the gray-robed grandmasters present were completely absorbed with their forging; the many years they had spent on this task had rendered them numb. They weren't on their guard at all.

"Who are you?" A gray-robed person noticed the white-robed Ning suddenly appear out of nowhere.

"An invader!"

"An outsider!"

The two black-robed figures that were responsible for overseeing this stand-alone region were all shocked. They let out cries of rage, then charged straight towards Ning.

"Hmph." Ning let out a cold snort. Waving his hand, he caused the enormous, three thousand meter tall Fiendgod Golem to suddenly vanish into thin air.

"NO!!" The faces of the two attacking black-robed figures completely changed. The invader had actually come for their Fiendgod-class golem! This was the most important golem in the entire castle; if it truly was to be lost...then the outcome would be disastrous for these two black-robed Fiendserfs who were responsible for guarding this place.

Streaks of snowy-white sword-light came sweeping towards them, causing the world to instantly be frozen. The two black-robed figures were also completely frozen, then shattered into dust.

The gray-robed figures in the region all stared in astonishment. Still...all of them were quite uncaring, and so they simply stood there and watched. They were filled with hatred towards the power that controlled this forbidden region; as far as they were concerned, the more black-robed figures died, the better.

"The white-robed figure is quite formidable. He actually launched an attack within the forbidden region...and by the looks of it, he even knows

about the Fiendgod Golem. He took it away right away.”

“Mm. He is pretty powerful; the black-robed figures are all at the Loose Immortal level, but they were eradicated with one blow.”

“It’d be nice if all of the black-robed men and the bronze-armored Fiendguards were to die.”

The gray-robed figures just watched and chatted to the side.

The bronze-armored Fiendguard outside the entrance to this region noticed the spatial disturbance inside. He came charging inside, but could only watch as the two black-robed figures were instantly killed. There was no chance to save them at all.

“Do you KNOW where you are? Do you really think this is a place you can just break into?” the Fiendguard let out an angry howl, then produced a longspear in his hands. He threw it viciously towards Ning.

Swooooosh! The longspear flashed with golden light, carrying an aura of tremendous power as it stabbed towards Ning.

“A Void-level Fiendgod?” Ning laughed coldly.

The bronze-armored fiendguards all at least had the power of Loose Immortals who had lived for a million years. This particular bronze-armored Fiendguard was one of the most powerful Fiendguards in this area; he was an ancient Void-level Fiendgod! This was why he had been assigned the duty of watching this region.

“DIE!!!” Ning swept out with his palm.

His palm instantly transformed, becoming more than three hundred meters long. After using the [Starseizing Hand], Ning’s palm carried an unearthly level of power. He slapped downwards, swatting the golden longspear aside. Although Ning’s [Starseizing Hand] had merely reached the Third Cycle, it already had the power of a Pure Yang treasure! The reason why Ning rarely used his hands to attack, preferring to use his Immortal swords, was simply because he was afraid that others would find out about him possessing the [Starseizing Hand].

However, Ning now trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], causing his entire body to become powerful; thus, he could use his hands to attack without fear of the [Starseizing Hand] being exposed.

Sword Immortals didn't necessarily have to use swords all the time. To a true Sword Immortal, a blade of grass, a stick, a longstaff, a spear, a palm, a leg...all of these could be used to execute swordplay. Ning's enormous, massive palm...glowed with a blurry golden light, as though it were a giant golden sword.

"How can this be?" The void-level Fiendgod Fiendguard was shocked. Letting out a growling roar, he used one hand to grab his longspear while using the other to block towards Ning.

BANG!

The enormous palm struck him directly on his body.

The powerful Void-level Fiendgod Fiendguard only had enough time to let out an agonized roar before his body was blasted apart. Just as his shattered body began to attempt to heal, a second, similarly enormous palm came slamming towards him. The two palms merged into a single palm which once more splattered the body of the Fiendguard. Bang! Bang! Bang! The two giant palms struck out repeatedly at a lightning-fast speed, each time shattering the body of the Fiendguard into ever-smaller pieces. More and more of the Fiendguard's divine power was used up, and after just a few more strikes, all of the divine power within his body had been depleted.

In just the blink of an eye, the Void-level Fiendguard had been killed!

"Such power!"

"But, but..."

"He's too incredible."

The watching gray-robed figures were all stupefied by what they saw. They knew exactly how powerful that bronze-armored Fiendguard had been. A Void-level Fiendgod! And yet, he had been killed, just like that?

“This is the true [Starseizing Hand]!” This was the first time Ning had truly unleashed the power of the [Starseizing Hand] as much as he pleased. “After I train in the Fourth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand]...my hands alone will be comparable to supreme Pure Yang treasures, close to middle-grade Protocosmic treasures. By then...the power of my [Starseizing Hand] shall undoubtedly be even greater.”

The Fifth Cycle would make his hands comparable to supreme Protocosmic treasures.

The Sixth Cycle was the level which Daoist Threelives had reached; at this level, he would be able to effortlessly shatter an entire major world with his hands!

BOOM!!!

Ning collected the treasures left behind by the Fiendguard, then charged out of the region like a primordial Fiendgod in full flight.

“Stop him.”

“Kill him.”

All the black-robed men and bronze-armored Fiendguards within the castle were quickly gathering together.

.....

Within the Eastwoods Sect of the Eastwoods mountain range. A silver-armored youth was fishing in a leisurely manner.

Suddenly...

A spatial ripple. It was like a stone had fallen into a lake, causing a ripple to spread in every direction. When it reached the silver-armored youth, his face instantly changed as he turned to look towards the forbidden region. “A Greater Spatial Teleportation? Not good!”

Bang!

The silver-armored youth instantly transformed into a streak of light, charging towards the forbidden region. He moved lightning-fast; although the forbidden region was protected by layers of mighty formations, the

formations were all under his control! He was able to easily bypass all of them, and he quickly arrived within that massive gorge. He immediately saw that castle up ahead.

Sounds of explosions could be heard from within the castle. Everything was in a state of the utmost chaos.

"THOSE WHO BAR ME, DIE!" An icy voice roared out from within the castle. The faces of the black-robed figures outside the castle were all ashen, and terror could be seen in their eyes.

"It's only been a few moments, but three of my bronze-armored Fiendguards have died already? Even Bosia died?" When the silver-armored youth sensed what had happened, his face grew even uglier. The Fiendguards were the most powerful warriors under his command; he knew all of them intimately. As he sensed one mighty aura after another be wiped out, he couldn't help but feel shocked...and realize how terrifying this foe was!

It had taken him very little time to return to the forbidden region, but three bronze-armored Fiendguards had already perished, to say nothing of the black-robed figures.

"Someone dares attack on my territory?"

The next feeling the silver-robed youth had was a feeling of anger and humiliation that he had never felt before. This was a proud man!

"Die!" The silver-robed youth could sense that the powerful figure within the castle had already charged out to the castle gates. The restrictions within the castle were also under the control of the general, and so he could clearly sense everything going on within it...as well as the fact that the Fiendgod Golem had already vanished.

A fiery godbow suddenly appeared in the silver-armored youth's hands, and a similarly fiery arrow appeared as well.

He pulled the bow!

He fired the arrow!

BANG!

The arrow shot out, instantly transforming into an enormous, divine flaming dragon that surged straight towards the castle gates.

A terrifying sword-light flew out from the castle gates, transforming into a divine black dragon. The divine black dragon and the divine flaming dragon collided against each other in midair, and in that instant, a white-robed youth walked out from the castle gates. The white-robed youth was surrounded with a teeming mass of Immortal swords, each one possessing an unearthly amount of power. They spread out in every direction, as though escorting their emperor forward.

The white-robed youth raised his head, looking upwards. He saw the distant silver-armored youth in the distant skies.

The silver-armored youth lowered his head, looking at the white-robed youth.

Their gazes met in midair, colliding as though they had mass to them.

“Nearly two hundred Immortal swords? And all of them seem to be top-grade Immortal-ranked!”

“A bow? Can it be that he, too, is a master archer?”

Each had their own thoughts.

Rumble...

The terrifying arrow and the light of the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation] collided head-on. The entire world seemed to go dark for a moment. And then...with a rumbling sound, rippling shockwaves spread out in every direction, with the ripples containing hints of sharp light. When the ripples struck some of the nearby black-robed figures, they were instantly turned into dust.

“Block!”

“Block it!”

More than ten Loose Immortals perished before the rest of the black-robed figures were able to escape from that ripple.

"Fiendserfs, all of you, step back," the silver-armored youth barked coldly. In a fight on this level...these black-robed Loose Immortals would be nothing more than cannon fodder.

"Yes." Instantly, all of the black-robed figures hurriedly fled. They normally liked to flaunt their power, and they could kill Wanxiang Adepts and Primal Adepts as easily as killing chickens, but upon encountering this terrifying figure...it was their turn to become the chickens.

"Fleeing? I have not permitted it!" The distant white-robed Ning let out an angry roar. Instantly, a hundred of the top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords around him shot out in every direction, striking towards the fleeing black-robed Loose Immortals. Ning had sworn long ago...that he wouldn't spare a single one of these figures who had harmed his junior apprentice-brother!

"You are courting death!" The silver-armored youth was enraged. He waved his hand, and instantly a black cloud that covered the skies appeared, spreading in every direction.

Chapter 5: Who Will Give Me My Freedom?

The black cloud was filled with a resilient power that covered the entire region below. The hundred top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords were unable to penetrate the black cloud, but...Ji Ning's attack was simply too fast. Prior to the black cloud appearing, he had killed more than twenty of the black-robed Loose Immortals.

The silver-armored youth's face grew even grimmer.

"Break." Ning took back his Immortal swords, then began to condense a streak of sword-light generated from the second stage of the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation]. This blindingly bright sword-light transformed into a divine black dragon which ripped apart the black clouds, soaring forward with arrogant abandon.

"Hmph." The silver-armored youth waved his hand, summoning the black cloud back. He glanced downwards, seeing that the black-robed figures had already fled by now.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

One bronze-armored Fiendguard after another began to arrive, coming to gather in the air behind the bronze-armored youth.

"Fiendguards, join into formation and launch a combined attack!" The silver-armored youth pointed downwards, then shouted, "You are not to attack separately."

"Yes." Instantly, the Fiendguards began to organize into squads of nine, joining into formations that transformed into Godbeasts that were three hundred meters long. This type of Godbeast appeared to be a tiger, but had even sharper claws and even longer fangs, while its fur was shaggier. Their eyes were filled a cold azure light.

"A Bi'an Godbeast tiger?" Ning was startled. "Last time, I encountered Bloodcloud Hall's Ba-Serpent Formation; I didn't expect to encounter a Bi'an Formation this time. This organization really is quite formidable." 1

Countless ages ago, the Ancestor Dragon was born from the primordial chaos. It was the most ancient of divine dragons, the first to be born from the chaos. It was even older than the Torch-Dragon! As the first dragon, it became known as the Ancestor Dragon.

The Ancestor Dragon had nine sons. 2

Every single one of the Nine Sons of the Dragon possessed tremendous power...and the Bi'an Tiger was one of them.

“Kill!”

“Kill him!”

The three Bi'an Godbeast tigers charged downwards from midair. Ning raised his head, staring up at those three Bi'an Godbeasts. He suddenly sensed the castle behind him beginning to shake. Turning his head, he glanced backwards, only to see another Bi'an Godbeast charging from him from the castle gates as well.

There had also been some bronze-armored Fiendguards within the castle. Because Ning had attacked so unexpectedly, they hadn't had the chance to join together into a formation yet.

“This white-robed man's Immortal swords are quite formidable; he should be a powerful Sword Immortal who is a Ki Refiner. Although Ki Refining Sword Immortals are formidable...they hate close combat. If we attack en masse, and if one of our claws land on him...he's dead.”

“Kill him. Otherwise, both the general and us shall be doomed.”

They all harbored murderous thoughts in their mind.

None of them wanted to let Ning leave alive. This was because the fact that the Eastwoods mountain range was being used to manufacture golems was a matter of the utmost secrecy. Once this location was exposed...the Grand Xia Dynasty would probably begin a frantic investigation. Now that they had a specific target, they'd probably be able to uncover even more gathering spots.

It must be understood...that up till now, not a single one of the

gathering points had been exposed yet! Although the Grand Xia Dynasty had discovered that a few places were rather ‘strange’, they weren’t sure what the places were doing, and so the Dynasty hadn’t made any rash decisions yet.

The Eastwoods mountain range gathering point was damnably unlucky. After all...the only person in the entire world of the Grand Xia who trained in the Seventy-Two Transformations was Ji Ning. Only he had the ability to stealthily infiltrate this place! Anyone else would have been completely unable to enter the area and discover the secrets within.

“We can’t let him escape!” The silver-armored youth’s eyes flashed with cold light as he stared down from the skies towards Ning. “If he flees, we’ll be in big trouble. The Master will definitely blame me for this!”

.....

The four Bi’an Godbeast tigers all possessed auras of tremendous power and majesty. Every single one of them was comparable to the Ba-Serpent of Bloodcloud Hall which had attempted to assassinate Ji Ning...but this Ji Ning was no longer the Ji Ning of the past. After reaching the sixteenth stage of the [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens], his power had skyrocketed once more.

“F*ck off.”

An enormous palm, also three hundred meters long, swatted down towards one of the Bi’an Tigers. The Bi’an Godbeast howled and swept out with its sharp paws, making full use of its extremely long and knife-sharp claws.

BANG!!!

The giant palm, covered with golden light, completely knocked this Bi’an Godbeast flying. The other three Bi’an Tigers attacked wildly en masse, but Ning began to brandish his other palm as well. As he did so, this palm also instantly increased to a size of three hundred meters, and it too swatted a Bi’an Godbeast away.

“Three Heads, Six Arms.” Ning transformed into his three-headed, six-

armed form. Now, six utterly enormous palms were slapping and swatting in every direction.

His palm-strikes all possessed the power of a Pure Yang treasure; they were far superior to Immortal swords. In addition, using Immortal swords required the use of elemental ki, whereas his [Starseizing Hand]-enhanced hands had been transformed into magic treasures long ago; just like the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], his palms didn't need to use any divine power at all. However, actively using the [Starseizing Hand] to unleash tremendous strength did require the use of divine power.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! Six giant palms, each flashing with a sharp golden light, struck out like a series of sharp swords, either chopping or thrusting or swatting.

The four Bi'an Godbeast tigers had intended on launching a group assault, but they were instead knocked flying backwards, one after the other.

“General!”

“General, this man is a fiendgod! And his divine body is extremely powerful; his body seems to be as unbreakable as a vajra. He's actually able to block our attacks just using his hands.”

The bronze-armored Fienguards all sent hurried mental messages to the silver-armored youth.

The silver-armored youth, upon seeing this happen from his position in midair, had an unsightly look on his face. “I didn't expect that his close combat abilities would be even more formidable than his sword-formation abilities.” In truth, if Ning had to use Immortal swords, his close combat abilities truly would be a bit weaker...but by relying on the power of his palms, he was actually slightly more powerful than the second stage of the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation].

“Ahahah! ‘General’...do you wish to keep fighting? You aren't able to do anything to me, while I can leave whenever I want.” Ning's laughter rang out from below.

"Halt!" The silver-armored youth barked.

Instantly, all four of the Bi'an Godbeast tigers hurriedly retreated, coming to hover in the air to each side of the silver-armored youth. They stared at the distant, white-robed Ning. All of them were rather shocked... the thirty-six of them, all Fiendguards, were actually unable to do anything to this person, even when fighting together. No wonder he had been able to so effortlessly slaughter them in the castle earlier.

"Given your power, you should've been able to use a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal to leave long ago, when you were still inside the castle," the silver-armored man said coldly. "But you didn't. This was for the sake of Mu Northson, right?"

Ning was startled. He had used the Seventy-Two Transformations to completely change his aura; why was it that this general immediately mentioned Mu Northson?

"Ji Ning." The silver-armored youth looked downwards. He said coldly, "Did you think I wouldn't be able to guess that it was you? In the entire world of the Grand Xia, the only ability that could allow someone to so stealthily infiltrate this castle is probably you, after using your Seventy-Two Transformations. When I also noticed that the only grandmaster within the castle who vanished was Mu Northson...the only person I could think of who would come to save him would be you, Ji Ning."

"Previously, I wasn't completely certain that you trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], but now...I am." The silver-armored man let out a cold laugh.

The white-robed youth below let out a loud laugh as well. His body flickered, then transformed into that of the fur-clad Ji Ning.

"Correct. It is indeed me. I knew that I wouldn't be able to hide the fact that I trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] for too much longer...after all, last time, I ended up trapped in your Eastwoods mountain range for quite some time. I didn't expect you to be able to guess it right away this time," Ning said. "I know that this Fiendgod Golem of yours is quite important. I can give it back to you, but you have to release my junior

apprentice-brother, Mu Northson, and give him back his freedom.”

“I trust that reobtaining a golem like this, comparable to a top-grade Pure Yang treasure, in exchange for just giving me my junior apprentice-brother is actually quite a decent bargain,” Ning said.

“A decent bargain? No. This is nothing more than a half-finished golem; it’s not even finished. It isn’t actually worth that much,” the silver-armored youth said.

“Perhaps not to outsiders, but to you, it is extremely valuable. You can work on it and complete it.” Ning raised his head to stare at the silver-armored youth. “I have only one request. Give my junior apprentice-brother his freedom back.”

“Hahahaha...freedom?!” The silver-armored youth was so enraged, he began to laugh. “If I give Mu Northson his freedom, who will give me my freedom?”

Ning was startled. Who would give him his freedom?

“You’ve discovered this forbidden region, which means its secret has been revealed. If I don’t kill you...how can I escape punishment?” A savage look was on the silver-armored man’s face. “Both you and your junior apprentice-brother can die.”

Ning instantly understood. Given that the mysterious power divided up its forces into ‘Fiendslaves’, ‘Fiendserfs’, ‘Fiendguards’, and ‘Fiendlords’, they undoubtedly held their Fiendlords to very high standards. Ning had barged into this location...once he exposed its secrets, the mysterious power would be put on a very bad position.

“Wait a moment,” Ning said hurriedly. “I’m willing to swear an oath to the Dao of the Heavens that I will not reveal what is happening here within the Eastwoods mountain range to anyone, and I will also return your Fiendgod Golem to you. You, in exchange, will release my junior apprentice-brother.”

“Even if you swear an oath to the Dao of the Heavens, I will still be punished. Thus...only if you die will I be safe.” The silver-armored youth

let out a lowl growl. “Do you think that just because you’ve trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] that I am unable to do anything to you? Hmph. Hmph! Many Celestial Immortals have perished before me, much less you, a mere Void-level.”

As his words came out, an azure serpent that was more than ten kilometers long suddenly appeared in midair. This azure serpent was extremely slender, and it came coiling towards Ning.

“A rope?” Ning was startled.

The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] divine ability feared restrictive magic treasures the most. For example, if he ended up being bound by this rope, there would be no way he could use any Dao-seals or enter his Immortal estate. That would be very bad indeed.

Thus...he absolutely could not let himself be bound.

“All I’m asking is that you let my junior apprentice-brother go free.” Immortal swords clustered around Ning as a sharp golden sword-light began to form in front of him.

“Only if I kill you will I be able to live comfortably,” the silver-armored youth bellowed back.

The golden sword-light collided against the enormous azure serpent in midair. The power of that rope, in the shape of the azure serpent, was truly tremendous. A single collision with it was enough to completely blast apart the divine black dragon which Ning’s golden sword-light had transformed into.

“If you don’t agree...then I’ll beat you until you do!” Ning had grown angry now as well. A black-robed Ning suddenly appeared out of nowhere next to him.

The two Ji Nings stood there, shoulder to shoulder.

A total of 324 top-grade Immortal-ranked magic treasures appeared in midair. His true body and his Primaltwin each controlled 162 of these Immortal swords! It must be understood that the memories and minds of the two bodies were completely linked and synced, and both of them

trained in the [Darknorth Sutra] as Ki Refiners...and in fact, both were at the late Void level!

The power of the [Darknorth Sutra] filled every single one of the top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords. Although his true body and his Primaltwin controlled the swords separately, it was as though a single person was controlling them!

And thus, a total of more than three hundred top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords were able to completely join together in formation!

Ruuuuuumble...

A golden Immortal sword, carrying a terrifying aura of majesty, manifested before Ning's true body and Primaltwin.

[Greater Thousand Swords Formation] – Stage Four!

This was Ning's true maximum combat power as a Ki Refiner! Power that was even greater than his true body's close combat abilities!

The fur-clad Ning and the black-robed Ning simultaneously let out an enraged roar.

“KILL!!!!”

*

1. Note; back in Book 2, Chapter 10, Ning encountered and killed a Bi'an Tiger, but that was a ‘normal’ one that was not a Godbeast; it was called an ‘An Beast’, whereas this one is called a ‘Bi’an Godbeast’. ↵
2. This is based on real Chinese mythology, the ‘nine sons of the dragon’ – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nine_sons_of_the.dragon.

Chapter 6: Soultamer Jade

Many combination-formations, such as the Ba-Serpent Formation or the Bi'an Formation, relied on different people occupying different parts of the formation. Upon coming together, their strength would increase explosively! What Ji Ning was currently using with his Primaltwin was something similar, something which mimicked a combination-formation. Although this wasn't intentional, it was even more meticulous and intricate than many true combination-formations.

"ROAAAAR!"

The golden Immortal sword before them transformed into an incomparably massive divine black dragon that was coiled. The divine black dragon let out a draconic roar, and the sound of this roar completely shook the world around them.

This was a majesty that came from more than three hundred top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords, after their power had been merged together through the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation]!

This power was so great, it eclipsed that of most divine abilities that Fiendgod Body Refiners trained in!

"What?!" The silver-armored youth's face changed slightly as he stared down from midair. "Block!"

"Hissssss..."

The azure serpent-formed rope in midair let out a hissing sound. The enormous azure serpent slithered forth, moving to collide head on against the divine black dragon.

The divine dragon soared into the skies!

The azure serpent came slithering forth!

BOOM!

The world itself shook tremendously...and then a blast of wild power exploded out in an omnidirectional ripple. When it struck the bodies of

those four Bi'an Godbeasts, a series of crackling sounds could be heard... but of course, they were able to withstand this level of energy. As for those weaker black-robed Loose Immortals, they had fled far away long ago.

The gorge around them, however, was in for some pain. It rumbled as the ground began to crack apart, and many nearby boulders were transformed into dust. The cliffs on each side of the gorge began to break apart on a large scale.

Faced with that blast of wild power, the surface of the castle began to flicker with a dark light. It managed to withstand the collusive force.

"Not good." The silver-armored man's face changed dramatically; the azure serpent in the air had been completely destroyed, transforming back into its original form of a rope. The divine black dragon, however, was still filled with enormous power. It continued to roar with abandon, wanting to continue to strike against the azure serpent. "This Ji Ning is actually so powerful! He's not even a Celestial Immortal yet, but the power of his Immortal swords is already so great."

"You want to capture me? General, you aren't strong enough yet!" The fur-clad Ning and the black-robed Ning both let out furious roars.

ROAAAAR!

The divine black dragon in the skies let out a draconic roar as well, then continued its upwards charge.

"I don't believe it. Don't believe it! I have to capture him." The silver-armored youth gritted his teeth. He didn't want to fail; he wasn't willing to accept the repercussions of failure. His hands joined together to form a seal as he shouted loudly, "ASURA!"

A powerful Immortal power rapidly began to summon the majestic power of the Heavens and the Earth, forming a tall, skinny, hideous, and completely black warrior. This hideous warrior hefted a double-edged blade with three tips and pointed it straight towards Ning, letting out a bellow: "Little thief, die!" And then, the hideous warrior charged straight forward.

“CELESTIAL GUARDIAN DRAGON!” The silver-armored youth’s hand-seals changed once again.

Yet another creature appeared in midair, a coiling divine dragon which was golden in color. The divine golden dragon let out a draconic roar of its own, then charged downwards as well.

“BIND!”

The enormous rope in midair once more transformed into that queer azure serpent. This time, the azure serpent’s tail had a snakehead at the end; it now had a head on each end, and it howled through the air as it charged towards Ning.

Controlling two secret arts and this magic treasure was actually extremely tiring for this silver-armored general as well.

.....

“Break. Break. Break!” The fur-clad Ning and the black-robed Ning simultaneously controlled the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation], using the more than three hundred top-grade Immortal-ranked magic swords to once more generate that incomparably sharp golden flying sword. The golden flying sword howled through the air, transforming into that divine black dragon. Now, there were two of the divine black dragons in the air.

Simultaneously maintaining two of the fourth-stage [Greater Thousand Swords Formation] sword-lights was a tremendous burden on Ning as well.

“Bind him. I have to bind him.” A look of savagery was on the face of the silver-armored youth. “I was only able to escape after enduring for countless years. I don’t want to be punished again. Absolutely not!”

From high up in the skies, the hideous Asura warrior, the Celestial Guardian Dragon, and the two-headed azure serpent launched simultaneous attacks downwards.

Two divine black dragons flew upwards, greeting the attacks.

BOOM BOOM BOOM!!!

A series of explosions could be heard from within the skies, and the surrounding area was filled with clashing blasts and ripples of power.

“Hahaha...General, this bit of ability isn’t enough,” Ning laughed loudly. The fourth-stage [Greater Thousand Swords Formation] sword-light, in the shape of the two divine dragons, was actually able to blast apart the Asura warrior and the Celestial Guardian Dragon before vanishing.

“Suppression!” The silver-armored youth suddenly waved his hand, and one giant seal after another began to appear in the skies. A total of seven grand seals appeared, each glowing with blurry light. The grand seals were covered with some characters, and they hovered there in the skies like giant mountains. Light flowed from one seal to another, merging them into a single whole.

“Crush him!” The silver-armored youth pointed furiously towards Ning.

The seven grand seals descended in awe-inspiring fashion en masse, rapidly joining together as they descended. They actually transformed into a true, enormous mountain as they smashed towards Ning.

“Break!”

Ning pointed upwards as well. The sword-light of the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation], in the form of two divine black dragons, soared straight into the heavens like fish that were swimming against the flow.

Boom...

The enormous mountain came crashing down. Both of the divine black dragons were actually blasted apart, causing Ning’s pupils to contract. He immediately executed his divine ability, transforming into a three-headed, six-armed giant that was three hundred meters tall. Ning simultaneously struck out with six mighty palms from his true body, slapping them against the descending mountain.

Rumble...

The world itself seemed to shake. Ning's true body was actually pushed all the way into the ground, which completely caved in and shattered in every direction.

Ning's true body was pressed chest-deep into the ground, but with a flicker he once more re-emerged.

"Hahaha, General, what a fine ability!" Ning laughed as he looked at the silver-armored youth.

The silver-armored youth had a gloomy look on his face.

"Damn. Damn!" The silver-armored youth's heart was filled with resentment. He now knew exactly how strong Ning was. He had to admit, this foe's sword-formation was incredibly powerful, but in terms of raw strength...Ji Ning was definitely far inferior to him. He was a supreme figure even amongst Celestial Immortals, after all!

But this wasn't a competition to see who was better; it was a fight where he had to capture his foe using his rope!

If they were simply competing to see who was better, he could wantonly use his seven low-grade Pure Yang treasures, those seven mighty seals, to unleash his most powerful attacks. But what he was trying to do was to trap his foe; thus, he had to divert some of his attention to controlling his rope, and also use quite a great deal of his energy to strengthen the rope. It was no easy feat to capture or trap a Fiendgod who trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]!

Since he had to split his attention up between his rope and the seals, he was naturally unable to use the seals to the full extent of their power.

"You win!" The silver-armored youth gave Ning a dark look. "I can neither kill you nor capture you."

He was clearly significantly stronger than Ji Ning...but he was simply unable to capture him!

This was what made the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] so formidable. There had to be an utterly enormous difference in power, allowing him to first break apart Ning's defense before capturing him. Clearly, the difference

in power between the general and Ning, while significant, wasn't ridiculously huge.

The entire gorge had been transformed into rubble. In the air above the rubble, the only figures that could be seen were the silver-armored general, a group of bronze-armored Fiendguards, as well as Ji Ning and Mu Northson.

The silver-armored general had finally bowed his head. He was unable to kill Ji Ning, and would be unable to avoid punishment. All he could do now was try his best to lessen the amount of damage caused and lower the amount of punishment he would receive.

"Good." Ning smiled and nodded. "That's wise."

The nearby Northson immediately had a look of relief appear within his eyes. Right then and there, Ji Ning, Mu Northson, and the silver-armored general all swore oaths to the Dao of the Heavens. Ning's promise...was that if Mu Northson was given freedom, he absolutely would not reveal the secret of the castle to others. Northson swore the same, that he absolutely wouldn't reveal this secret to anyone else.

The silver-armored general naturally gave Northson his freedom back after this.

"General, please open your formation and let us leave." Ning stood there in midair, Northson by his side with a relieved look on his face. He seemed to have suddenly become filled with vitality, as well as hope for the future.

"Not so fast." The silver-armored general let out a sigh. "Before you leave, I will tell you a bit of bad news."

Ning and Northson's faces instantly changed.

Bad news?

"This was a disastrous defeat for me." The silver-armored general sighed. "The forbidden region was under very tight guard, and even the formations experts which I captured were all forced to swear oaths to the Dao of the Heavens not to flee. If they do...they die. Thus, I never thought

that someone would be able to sneak in...I suppose I'm just damned unlucky to encounter someone who trains in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art].”

“Enough with the crap. What do you want to say?” Ning barked with a frown.

After the silver-armored general let out another series of sighs, he looked towards Ning and Northson, then said with a cold laugh, “The person in charge of matters within the castle, Qu Huan, is already dead. If my guess is correct...this Mu Northson has already taken his loved one’s soul back.”

Northson barked, “So what if I did?”

“Have you heard of soultamer jade?” The silver-armored general chortled as he spoke. He felt delighted in being able to irritate these two figures.

“Soultamer jade?” Northson and Ning’s faces instantly changed. Ning had learned about quite a few bits of common knowledge regarding the Three Realms while at Mount Innerheart; naturally, he knew of soultamer jade. As for Northson, given he had analyzed the Dao of Constructs quite extensively, he naturally had heard of soultamer jade, one of the legendary materials for the Dao of Constructs.

Soultamer jade: Once a soul was placed into the soultamer jade, it would become one with the jade. There would be no chance of escape! However, the soul would be nourished by the soultamer jade; so long as it didn’t suffer any attacks and wasn’t destroyed, the soul inside could live forever. Generally speaking, golem experts would place soultamer jade into their golems, allowing the soul within the soultamer jade to control the golem, making it sentient.

“Can it be that you can’t tell?” The silver-armored general smiled. “That crystalline globe used to store her soul is soultamer jade!”

“What?!” Northson was shocked and angry.

“It’s finished.” Ning looked towards his nearby junior apprentice-

brother; now that Yu Xia's soul had been placed within that soultamer jade globe, she would never be able to emerge from within it. She would forever have to live within that tiny little space. This was actually quite a painful thing...and she would have forever lost her chance to be reincarnated.

"But perhaps this is a good thing," Ning mused.

There were two sides to every coin. Yu Xia's soul had been merged into the soultamer jade, and she would never be able to leave or be reborn; this was indeed quite a painful thing.

And yet...this meant that she would still be able to accompany Northson.

"Mu Northson," the distant silver-armored general said with a cold laugh, "Your loved one's soul shall accompany you for eternity. You are quite blessed. But...don't forget that she'll be forever trapped within that tiny space. How agonizing must that be? This sort of agony will accompany her for countless ages, until the day comes that she is attacked and her 'body' is destroyed. In that moment...her soul shall shatter."

Northson gritted his teeth. "Little Xia..."

He felt guilt.

Seeing this, Ning couldn't help but secretly sigh to himself. The distant silver-armored general, however, just laughed loudly. "See how nice I am? I even told you this bit of information. Alright...you can scram now."

"Let's go." Ning gave the distant silver-armored general a cold glare, then took Northson into his mobile Immortal estate. He then flew into the skies, the formations not blocking him at all. Ning quickly flew away, then once more used a spatial teleportation technique. He disappeared.

Chapter 7: The Cavemaster

The silver-armored youth raised his head, staring at the sky. It was dusk. He let out a sigh. “My happy days are coming to an end.”

“General.”

The bronze-armored Fiendguards all nervously stared at the silver-armored youth.

After sighing, the silver-armored youth turned and quickly moved through the many layers of restrictive formations around the forbidden region. Outside were gathered many of the black-robed figures, as well as the members of the Eastwoods Sect. The enormous disturbance and the spatial teleportations had attracted attention from many outsiders.

“General.” The Eastwoods sect leader hurriedly went forward to greet him. “What has happened? Is there anything you need our Eastwoods Sect to do?”

“What happened?” The silver-armored general murmured these words, then waved his hand. Instantly, the illusion of an enormous mountain appeared out of nowhere. It smashed straight down on the body of the Eastwoods sect leader. Boom! The Eastwoods sect leader was completely smashed into pulp, then the remnants were transformed into dust that flew away.

The surrounding Loose Immortals, Earth Immortals, Primal Daoists, Wanxiang Adepts, and other disciples of the Eastwoods Sect were all in disbelief.

Some of them, however, revealed looks of joy. “It’s good that he died.”

The Eastwoods sect leader had been a classic case of a spineless figure who had quickly capitulated. This caused some of the disciples who had been unhappy with the current state of affairs to feel disdain for him.

The silver-armored general instructed calmly, “All disciples of the Eastwoods Sect, hear me: If you are willing to be loyal to me and serve me, if you are willing to become slaves under my command...go down on your

knees immediately.”

His voice was actually quite soft...but it echoed within the minds of each member of the Eastwoods Sect. Everyone in the sect, whether roaming around, patrolling the mountain, training, or resting in seclusion...was completely stunned.

“You have to a count of ten to decide,” the silver-armored general said calmly.

“Willing! I’m willing!” Instantly, some disciples capitulated and knelt down.

However, quite a few disciples revealed looks of disbelief.

Loyalty? Submission?

This was simple.

But willingly become slaves? This was too ridiculous. They were Immortal cultivators, and many of them had felt unhappy for quite some time now. At first, the silver-armored general had been fairly amiable towards them, but now he actually spoke of them being his slaves? Slaves...that meant giving their lives to him and completely obeying his orders.

“Ten. Nine. Eight. Seven...” The silver-armored general counted slowly.
“Six. Five!”

After counting to five, he suddenly stopped counting.

The silver-armored general let out a laugh. With a single step, he moved to stand high up in the air. The world itself began to shudder, and one massive mountain after another began to lift up and hover in the air. This was the Divine Venomflame of the Nine Heavens Cauldron which he had previously used against Ji Ning.

“The Eastwoods Sect has more than thirty-nine thousand disciples.” The silver-armored general’s voice reverberated in the air. “More than twenty thousand have knelt, including twenty-one Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals and three hundred and one Primal Daoists. These three

hundred and twenty-two are permitted to remain alive...the rest shall all perish!"

His voice reverberated throughout the entire Eastwoods mountain range.

And then...flames began to erupt throughout the area, moving to fill every single part of the Eastwoods mountain range.

"General, you haven't finished counting to ten yet!"

"General!"

The hesitating Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals, upon seeing this, instantly began to call out frantically. Some of the Primal Daoists, Earth Immortals, and Loose Immortals actually fell to their knees right away.

"Too late," the silver-armored general laughed.

Streaks of flame were filling the entire region. Those hidden away in secret rooms, those roving the mountains, those fleeing...all of them were turned to ash as soon as they were touched by the flames! The Divine Venomflame of the Nine Heavens was very dangerous for Celestial Immortals; how could these ordinary disciples of the Eastwoods Sect possibly withstand it?

"No! I submitted! I SUBMITTED! General, I'm willing to be your slave!" A youth cried out miserably, right before he was burnt to ash by the flames.

"A puny Zifu Disciple...just what am I supposed to do with you?" The silver-armored general sneered.

Despair filled every part of the Eastwoods mountain range.

The only ones to survive were the Primal Daoists and Void-level Immortals who had knelt by the count of five. The others...perished to the man. Some of them chose to self-detonate, but their souls were still trapped by the grand formation protecting the Eastwoods Mountain range. Their souls were annihilated; none were spared at all.

Moments later...things turned completely silent.

“Come in.” The silver-armored general waved his hand, and an enormous sack suddenly appeared. The mouth of the sack opened, instantly drawing in the Primal Daoists, Loose Immortals, and Earth Immortals below him.

He made one more trip to the forbidden region, collecting all of the grandmasters of the Dao of Constructs, the castle, and the other things within.

“Time to go.” The silver-armored general led his bronze-armored Fiendguards to the entrance to that black, fog-shrouded cave...then stepped straight into it.

Moments later...the cave entrance itself disappeared.

The entire Eastwoods mountain range had become completely silent. All living creatures, including the animals that had lived here, had been completely wiped out. Even all the formations present, such as the Divine Venomflame of the Nine Heavens Cauldron, had been broken.

The Eastwoods Sect...starting from today, it truly no longer existed!

.....

This was an extremely large world.

The commandery city in the center of this world was an incomparably massive fortress. The fortress was so large that even Celestial Immortals would be unable to see it in its entirety.

“We’re back. We’ve finally returned to the Fifth World.”

A black foggy cave entrance appeared in the skies, and the silver-armored youth and his bronze-armored Fiendguards appeared from within it.

Rumble...an invisible surge of power swept across this squad.

“General.” The bronze-armored Fiendguards looked towards the silver-armored youth.

“Go to the headquarters and await further orders,” the silver-armored general said with a sigh. “This time, I shall most probably be sent into

exile...and you'll probably have to suffer with me."

"It's not your fault, General. If we have to blame someone, we have to blame that Ji Ning."

"Right. That Ji Ning actually knew the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]. You can't be blamed at all, General!" The crowd of bronze-armored Fiendguards hurriedly said.

The silver-armored general chuckled. "Alright. I need to go see the Cavemaster. Go ahead and wait for me in the headquarters."

"Yes," the bronze-armored Fiendguards said.

The silver-armored youth transformed into a streak of light, soaring down from the skies and into that castle below. A corridor automatically opened, granting him entrance. As for the bronze-armored Fiendguards, they all had to land and walk in through the gates to the city. The general was a Celestial Immortal, after all; his status was much higher than theirs.

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Within a massive palace.

A man dressed in fiery red robes was seated up high on a royal throne, staring downwards. His terrifying aura was absolutely no weaker than that of the Grand Xia Emperor's.

The silver-armored youth moved into the palace, then respectfully bowed from the waist. "Greetings, Cavemaster."

"Buchasi." The fire-robed man glanced downwards, then frowned slightly. "Aren't you supposed to be in Flamedoor Commandery of the world of the Grand Xia? Your assignment is to watch over the construction of the constructs there; you can't let anything go wrong. Why have you left the world of the Grand Xia and returned here without being summoned?"

"Your subordinate's base in the Eastwoods mountain range of Flamedoor Commandery was infiltrated..." The silver-armored youth

honestly told the complete story of what had happened, because he knew exactly how powerful this organization was. Even if he didn't tell the truth, within a single day, the organization would learn of everything which had happened in the Eastwoods mountain range."

"The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]? Ji Ning?" The fire-robed man frowned.

The silver-armored youth was so nervous, sweat emerged from his forehead.

"You truly have disappointed me." The fire-robed man shook his head and sighed.

"Cavemaster, I...I..." the silver-armored youth felt some unwillingness to accept this. He truly could not be held to blame for what had happened; any base would have found it difficult to deal with the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]."

"Successes are to be rewarded. Mistakes are to be punished," the Cavemaster said coldly. "Buchasi, because of you, our invasion of the world of the Grand Xia will become even more difficult. I punish you thusly...take your subordinates and go to the Mount Stele major world. Establish a new base there and continue to manufacture constructs. In addition, within a hundred years, you must slay five Celestial Immortals."

The silver-armored youth's heart shook.

The Mount Stele major world?

That world was completely different from the world of the Grand Xia. The Grand Xia world was a unified world, whereas the Mount Stele major world was in a state of tremendous chaos. Thus, battles had swept the world long ago. To go to the world of the Grand Xia was to enjoy life, but to go to the world of Mount Stele was to be forced to prepare for battles at all times...and he also had to kill five Celestial Immortals!

No Celestial Immortal was easy to deal with. They had all lived for countless ages, and no one knew exactly what tricks each had up their sleeves. Perhaps one might have an advantage, but then the enemy's friends or master would suddenly arrive. Thus...killing Celestial

Immortals was an extremely dangerous task. Yes, he had killed more than ten Celestial Immortals, but this was a bodycount that had been accumulated over countless ages, and after experiencing countless dangers.

He had finally been given a chance to enjoy life after being sent to the world of the Grand Xia to manufacture golems; in that place, he hadn't had any dangerous assignments at all. And now...the good life had to come to an end. A much harder life was to begin...and he might just die there, within the world of Mount Stele!

And this wasn't as bad as it could have been; if Ji Ning hadn't needed something for him and had thus sworn an oath to the Dao of the Heavens not to reveal this secret, his punishment probably would've been even heavier!

"Yes," the silver-armored youth said respectfully..

"You head out immediately. Go." The Cavemaster waved a hand.

The silver-armored youth immediately retreated, departing from the palace.

The palace became completely quiet.

Whoosh.

An alluring, white-robed woman suddenly appeared behind the Cavemaster. She was utterly ravishing, and her slender waist could just barely be seen under her semi-translucent white clothes. She laughed softly, "Master, Buchashi is one of your most formidable warriors...and hasn't that Ji Ning sworn an oath to the Dao of the Heavens already?"

"What do you know?" The Cavemaster said calmly, "Ji Ning has sworn an oath to the Dao of the Heavens not to reveal the fact that the castle was making constructs, true...but Ji Ning is very close to the Xia Emperor. He can absolutely come up with a way to warn him...and once that happens, our invasion of the world of the Grand Xia shall become even more difficult."

"Why are so you cautious in dealing with this world, a single major

world?" The alluring woman mumbled.

"The world of the Grand Xia is different from ordinary major worlds," the Cavemaster said. "The Xia Emperor is of the imperial bloodline of Pangu's Primordial World; how deep a foundation do you think he has? No one knows what someone like him, a descendent of the imperial clan of the Primordial Era, has up his sleeve. In addition, the Xia Emperor and Daofather Raindragon are extremely good friends. When invading the world of the Grand Xia, we have to beware Daofather Raindragon as well. How can I possibly NOT be cautious?"

The alluring woman said with surprise, "Daofather Raindragon? Master, you've never spoken of this before."

"There was no need to. You aren't even a Celestial Immortal," the Cavemaster said with resignation.

"Is the Xia Emperor really such close friends with Daofather Raindragon?" The alluring woman was truly curious about this.

"This is a 'secret' for you, but all the experts of the Three Realms know about this." The Cavemaster shook his head. "In fact, the Xia Emperor has done his best to spread the news far and wide. He even made it so that in his major world, 'Raindragon Mountain' was even taller than his own 'Skylight Palace'! Skylight Palace is his imperial palace; it represents himself, the Xia Emperor. For Raindragon Mountain to be slightly taller than it...what did you think it represented? It naturally represented someone even more powerful than him! In the Three Realms, the only person who has a connection to Raindragon Mountain is Daofather Raindragon!"

The alluring woman now understood. "I've always wondered about that! Master, all of you are True Immortals or Empyrean Gods, but none of you have ever fought each other."

"Don't underestimate the Xia Emperor. Even if Daofather Raindragon doesn't intervene, invading the world of the Grand Xia will be no easy task. The imperial clan of the Primordial Era? Hmph...that's not just a meaningless phrase. Even though he's merely of one of the side branches

of that lineage, he won't be easy to deal with," the Cavemaster said.

Chapter 8: A Sense of Danger

The alluring woman nodded. “Understood. I always thought that the world of the Grand Xia wasn’t that powerful. The world of Mount Stele, for example, has three True Immortals or Empyrean Gods.”

“The world of the Grand Xia is blessed by tremendous luck; in all of the Three Realms, it ranks at the very top. Given that such a major world has been completely unified...how could it be weaker than the likes of the Mount Stele world?” The Cavemaster shook his head. “You have to understand that in order to unify a major world, the unifier has to have either tremendous personal power or an extremely significant background.”

“Oh. Then, Master...that Ji Ning...what should we do to him?” The alluring woman asked.

“He trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], which means that his master is one of the most supreme of Daofathers.” The Cavemaster laughed. “However...it doesn’t matter who his master is, because he definitely isn’t on our side. If Ji Ning is allowed to develop within the world of the Grand Xia, he’ll just end up being a source of serious trouble to us. Ideally, we should kill him right away! Even the Daofather behind him would probably have to seriously consider whether or not it is worth it for him to get involved for the sake of a single disciple.”

“How should we kill him?” The alluring woman asked.

“Our Myriad Demons Cave is responsible for manufacturing golems. Fighting and killing isn’t our field of responsibility. Killing enemies will be rewarded, if we don’t fight, that’s fine as well.” The Cavemaster laughed, “Since even Buchasi was unable to do anything to Ji Ning, he’s definitely going to be a tough nut to crack. Leave it to the Seamless Gate. Disciple, make a trip on my behalf to speak with the Gatekeeper of the Seamless Gate. Have them kill Ji Ning, this unexpected variable, as soon as possible.”

“Yes.” The alluring woman respectfully assented to the order...and then

she left the palace.

This commandery city was enormous, and it was divided into many regions. The insides of the city were tightly guarded. This alluring woman was a beloved disciple of the Cavemaster of the Myriad Demons Cave, and her status was comparable to an ordinary Celestial Immortal's. Thus, she was able to quickly arrive at the closest local headquarters of the Seamless Gate.

The Grand Xia Dynasty had been searching for the headquarters of the Seamless Gate this entire time to no avail.

This was because...the Seamless Gate's headquarters was located within this world, the Fifth World. This Fifth World was so powerful that even Celestial Immortals who dared to barge in would be instantly slain. If a True Immortal or Empyrean God entered, then immediately moved to flee, they might be able to escape...but if they tried to fight head-on, they would probably perish as well.

Figures could often be seen flying about in the air above the commandery city. Anyone who dared fly within a commandery city of the Fifth World had to be at least at the Celestial Immortal level. There were so many Celestial Immortals here that one could usually see at least ten thousand figures flying about in the skies. The total number of Celestial Immortals present was truly astonishing.

In truth, the Cavemaster of the Myriad Demons Cave and the Gatemaster of the Seamless Gate were all just a very small part of the full power of the Fifth World.

.....

“Silkworm greets you, Gatemaster,” the alluring woman said respectfully.

“What is it?” An azure-robed woman with long, unbound hair was seated in the lotus position, her eyes shut. She was the Gatemaster of the Seamless Gate. By her side were two standing maidservants.

The alluring woman said respectfully, “This matter involves someone

named Ji Ning..."

She told the entire tale from start to finish with great detail.

"Your master's assignment is the same as mine; we have been assigned the worlds of the Grand Xia, Mount Stele, and Dreamsong." The azure-robed woman opened her eyes, then said calmly, "The toughest world to invade is the world of the Grand Xia...but your Myriad Demons Cave has actually made committed an error like this, making this assignment even harder to complete. And now, you want my Seamless Gate to wipe your ass for you and clean this up? Still...since your master has made the request, I'll accept. Go back and say this...say...‘Old crow, if you can't even accomplish a task like forging golems, I think you should let someone else take over your job.’"

The alluring woman's face changed, but she didn't dare argue back. She said respectfully, "Yes."

"Go," the azure-robed woman said calmly.

The alluring woman immediately departed.

The azure-robed woman called out, "Violetgrass."

"Gatemaster." One of the two nearby maidens, the one whose face was covered with a violet flowery tattoo, hurriedly called out with respect.

"You heard it all. I'm leaving this matter regarding Ji Ning for you to handle. How to deal with him, what arrangements to make; it is all completely up to you. You've followed me for many years, and you are quite familiar with our affairs in the Grand Xia. Although this is a somewhat troublesome assignment, I trust that you will be able to complete it well." The azure-robed woman's voice and tone was much kinder than before; clearly, she doted on this servant of hers very much.

"Don't worry, Master. I know Ji Ning quite well; I have plenty of ways to deal with him," Violetgrass said respectfully.

"Good. Go make your preparations, then head to the major world of the Grand Xia," the violet-robed woman instructed.

That very day. The maiden, dressed in a golden robe that was embroidered with images of violet grass and flowers, led nine Celestial Immortals to quietly depart from the Fifth World and go to the world of the Grand Xia.

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Stillwater Commandery. A desolate area that was hundreds of thousands of kilometers away from Stillwater City. There was a beautiful lake here, with a wooden house next to it.

It was already dusk.

Two figures appeared in the air here, then landed on the ground.

"Little Xia...we're back." Mu Northson cupped that soultamer jade globe in his hands as he spoke out softly.

"The grass here had been completely destroyed, but it's all grown back now." A woman's voice came out from the jade globe; she was very happy right now. "Fortunately, that battle didn't end up damaging our house."

Northson looked towards the wooden house as well.

He had personally chopped the wood and built that house, using some of his skill in the Dao of Constructs as he did so. Thus, despite the passage of twenty years, the wooden house remained in perfect condition. In fact, weaker individuals wouldn't even be able to go inside it.

"It wasn't damaged, but that was because we were too weak back then. Thus, we were captured effortlessly by those black-robed figures," Northson laughed.

"We're finally free. We've finally escaped. Northson, we won't have to be so unhappy in the future," the woman in the jade globe said, her voice filled with joy.

Ning just watched quietly from the side. In his heart, he sighed to himself.

His original plan was to allow the soul of Yu Xia to go and be reborn into his Ji clan. He would help Northson take care of the reincarnated Yu

Xia and come up with a way for her to recover her memories! This was something which he was capable of doing; after all, after the Six Paths of Reincarnation were destroyed, all the major powers had begun to set up new paths of reincarnation for their territories.

Every single one of them was like a miniature cycle of reincarnation. The Crescent world, for example, had a miniature cycle of reincarnation within it as well.

"Alas..." Ning mused to himself, "There's no way to change things now. She'll forever be trapped within that soultamer jade sphere. Most likely, the only thing sustaining her right now is the love between her and Northson, as well as some things that she still cares for in the mortal world."

"Senior apprentice-brother." Northson came walking over.

"Junior apprentice-brother." Ning looked at Northson. He could sense that although his junior apprentice-brother felt some regret and pain in his heart, he was clearly once more filled with vigor and energy. He didn't look as tired and dispirited as he had in the past.

"If it wasn't for you, I probably would've died in that place," Northson said. "Senior apprentice-brother, no need to worry about me; you can go back now. In the future, if there's anything you need, you can find me here."

"The current world of the Grand Xia is filled with dangerous undercurrents, while you are a grandmaster of the Dao of Constructs. How am I suppose to rest my mind, knowing you are here?" Ning said hurriedly.

"There really is no need for you to stay. I'm a Void-level Earth Immortal now, after all; if I'm careful, I'll be fine," Northson said.

Ning frowned. Then, with a wave of his hand, he produced a storage magic treasure. One enormous construct after another instantly appeared next to them, such as a Turtle-Snake, a winged bird-man, or an eight-clawed serpent. In total, there were six golems.

"These are the golems I acquired after I killed the bronze-armored Fiendguard called Qu Huan. They feel fairly powerful to me," Ning said. "Find one that is suited to you and which will allow you to increase your power the most."

Northson glanced at them, his gaze settling down upon that of the winged golem. He called out in surprise, "A Winged Immortal golem? How can you have one of them? Generally speaking, bronze-armored Fiendguards aren't qualified to possess golems of the Winged Immortal class."

"Winged Immortal class?" Ning was curious as well.

"This is the second-ranked golem within the forbidden region," Northson said. "Look at its wings; its wings can unleash the 'Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds', and its speed is extremely fast as well! Even a mere Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal who is in control of a Winged Immortal golem will instantly have the combat power of a Celestial Immortal. However, its main purpose is to unleash the 'Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds', then immediately flee. In battle, it should be extremely, extremely valuable."

Northson knew how to make these things, but he didn't know exactly how much they were worth.

Ning, however, did. Upon hearing his junior apprentice-brother say these things, he could guess that this golem was probably comparable in value to a middle-grade Pure Yang treasure.

"The others are a bit weaker; perhaps all five of them added together would be comparable to a single Winged Immortal class," Northson said.

Ning thus immediately came to the conclusion that the other four were probably comparable to a low-grade Pure Yang treasure."

"They really do spare no expense, thanks to their wealth. Every single bronze-armored Fiendguard had at least one such golem...this is probably the same amount of wealth as most Celestial Immortals possess," Ning mused to himself.

But here, Ning was wrong. He valued them as a low-grade Pure Yang treasure, but that was the ‘list price’ here in the Three Realms for someone seeking to purchase them; in truth, to the mysterious power, these items were nothing more than a collection of precious ingredients, and the value of those ingredients was perhaps a tenth of the value of the complete item. For a truly supreme golem...the formation-diagram within it was actually of the greatest value. Without a detailed formation-diagram, no matter how good your ingredients were, you wouldn’t be able to complete the forging.

“Junior apprentice-brother, take this Winged Immortal class,” Ning said.

Northson was greatly shocked. He hurriedly said, ”Senior apprentice-brother, this Winged Immortal class will be of great use to you. Ji Ning, you saved my life; I, Mu Northson, already feel tremendous gratitude to you for his. How can I accept this?”

“Haha, junior apprentice-brother, I was able to enter and leave that forbidden region as I pleased; not even that ‘general’ was able to do anything to me. This Winged Immortal golem might be important to others, but it really isn’t that useful for me. All I would do would be to sell it off.” Ning shook his head and laughed; this was nothing more than the truth, after all. The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was much better at protecting him than the golem would be.

“But...”

“If you don’t accept it, how could I rest my mind? Enough, stop wasting words; I’m going to leave now.” Ning waved his arm and collected the other golems, then disappeared without another word.

Northson held the soultamer jade in his arms. He murmured softly, “Senior apprentice-brother...”

“Northson, your senior apprentice-brother has helped us so much. Never forget it,” the woman within the jade globe said.

“Right.” Northson nodded.

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Ning secretly watched as Northson bound the Winged Immortal golem, then took the jade globe to go and sit down at the entrance to the wooden house, where he simply stared at the lake. Every so often, he would say a few things to the jade globe. This sight caused Ning to feel quite heartsick. After watching a time, he finally, truly left.

"It is time to go to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia."

"This time, I rescued my junior apprentice-brother, but I offended that mysterious power. I need to acquire Five Elements essence as soon as possible to train my [Starseizing Hand] to the Fourth Cycle." Ning had a premonition of incoming danger. This sense of danger was compelling him to increase his own power as soon as he could!

Chapter 9: A Talk at Night

It was late at night. Ji Ning used a void blink to arrive within the centermost city of the entire world of the Grand Xia.

Within the Heavenly Treasures Mountain of the imperial capital of the Grand Xia. Within a residence. Ning was drinking wine by himself, facing the bright moon.

“Eh?” Ning’s ears twitched; he glanced sideways. A white-robed, silver-haired man had just come walking in through the door.

“Senior Skyfox,” Ning laughed, then rose to his feet.

“Since you’ve hurried here so late at night, I’m sure you must have an urgent matter to deal with.” The silver-haired man smiled as he spoke. “Ji Ning, if there’s anything you need, just tell me. His Imperial Majesty has ordered this long ago; I naturally won’t be the slightest bit negligent.”

Ning nodded. “I need to buy some precious items.”

“Precious? How precious?” The silver-haired man asked.

“I need fifteen thousand kilograms of gold-gems from the Deva Realm, thirty thousand kilograms of azurespirit jade bamboo, forty-five thousand kilograms of arcane elemental Yin-water from the Milky Way, fifteen hundred kilograms of dragonfish spirit-lava, and six hundred kilograms of chaos spirit-earth,” Ning said.

Hearing this, the face of the silver-haired man changed. “That much?”

“At LEAST that much.” Ning nodded.

There were other alternatives, of course...but the items which Ning had reported were already the cheapest items with Five Elements essence that could be used to train in the Fourth Cycle of the [Six Cycles of the Starseizer]. If he had the chance, he would naturally be willing to choose the more expensive items; for example, Five Elements peacock plumes from a peacock Godbeast that was at the Empyrean God level would be more than enough; in fact, there would be a great deal left over!

However, the lineage of a Godbeast at the Empyrean God level would be incomparably pure. Such an item would be far too precious, more valuable than even an ordinary top-grade Pure Yang treasure! And, more importantly, such things were incredibly rare! Since the founding of the universe by Pangu, the total number of peacock Godbeast that had reached the Empyrean God level and which had access to all five of the Five Elements could be counted on one hand. Only two of them had perished, and the Five Elements peacock plumes they had left behind had long ago been acquired by various major powers in order to create even more valuable items. How could Ning possibly buy them somewhere? And even if he could find them, how could he afford it?!

“Your request is too great. These are all precious items of the Three Realms; they represent the essence of the Five Elements. There are many uses for such items, from forging artifacts to refining pills. I’ll help you ask his Imperial Majesty,” the silver-haired man said.

Ning laughed, then nodded.

The silver-haired man sat down, then poured himself some wine. He said with a laugh, “Let’s drink some wine first. His Imperial Majesty will give his answer shortly.”

“Alright.” Ning knew that this person was the Xia Emperor’s spirit-beast; they could communicate spiritually to each other.

“Ji Ning, what do you want these things for? Refining pills? Forging magic treasures? Creating golems?” The silver-haired man asked. “You’ve trained for less than a hundred years. Regardless of what you need it for... the art of refining pills and forging magic treasures is one that takes an enormous amount of time to study. The experts in these fields within the Three Realms are all at least at the Celestial Immortal level. Because they have limitless lifespans, they can slowly spend their time in analyzing these fields.”

Ning laughed as well. Indeed; the spirit of the underwater estate, for example, had used an utterly terrifying amount of time to upgrade the Thousandbull Sword. From a certain perspective, it could be said that the

spirit of the underwater estate was actually fairly weak in this field; otherwise, he wouldn't have had to spend such an enormous amount of time.

"I have my uses for it," Ning said.

The [Starseizing Hand] was simply too famous, but no one knew exactly how one trained in it! He didn't have to worry at all about his [Starseizing Hand] being revealed thanks to him purchasing Five Elements items.

"Hahaha..." The silver-haired man laughed, not pursuing this line of questioning. A short while later, his eyes lit up. "Ji Ning, his Imperial Majesty has informed me that he can provide you with enough gold-gems from the Deva Realm and arcane elemental Yin-water from the Milky Way, but he's not able to come up with enough of the other three items."

"Then let me change them to some different items." Ning suggested three different alternatives.

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"Don't have it."

"Not enough."

"Ji Ning, these treasures that you are requesting are all Five Elements treasures that are on the same level." The silver-haired man shook his head. "His Imperial Majesty says that he is not an expert in forging items or refining pills, and so he hasn't kept a large amount of these items in his stockpile. If you wish, he can go and find some of his friends and trade treasures with them to come up with enough for you."

Ning immediately said with gratitude, "I would be utterly grateful if he did."

"Ji Ning, you should know by now that the more valuable a treasure is, the harder it is to purchase; generally, you have to trade using items of similar value." The silver-haired man looked towards Ning. "If you want these items, you need to bring out enough treasures to trade for them. Do you have enough?"

"What sort of treasures do I need to bring out for them?" Ning asked.

"One normal high-grade Pure Yang Treasure is enough," the silver-haired man said with a laugh. "Twenty of those arrows you brought last time is enough."

Ning sighed in his heart.

Five Elements ingredients and treasures were actually this expensive? But there was nothing for it. The [Starseizing Hand] required increasingly extravagant amounts of ingredients for the later stages. Fortunately, all he had to train was his pair of hands. If he had to train his entire body, like with the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], then the price would be even more ridiculous.

Right now, he had reached the sixteenth stage of the [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens]; he could train his [Starseizing Hand] to the Fourth Cycle now, and train all the way to the Sixth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]. However, the resources needed for the Art was a thousand times greater than the previous price he had paid...most likely, he would need at least ten top-grade Pure Yang treasures. This caused Ning to feel truly resigned!

Top-grade Pure Yang treasures had power comparable to middle-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures. Many Pure Yang True Immortals and Empyrean Gods used treasures on this level; for even one of them to produce ten such items would prove a serious burden. This was why even Ning's senior apprentice-brother, Empyrean God Silvermoon, had only trained to the Sixth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art].

"For now, I can forget about training further in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]. That's too distant a goal. First, the [Starseizing Hand]."

"Ji Ning, are you able to produce enough treasures?" The silver-haired man looked at Ning, a smile on his face.

"Please ask his Imperial Majesty to prepare enough of the Five Elements items," Ning said. "Once his Imperial Majesty has prepared them, I'll naturally bring out enough treasures to trade for them."

“Alright.” The silver-haired man said, “His Imperial Majesty will personally act to gather these treasures for you. Once he has, I’ll immediately notify you.”

Ning waved his hand, producing a jade talisman. “This is my message talisman. Once you shatter it, I’ll sense it and will hurry back here to the imperial capital.” It was extremely easy to manufacture jade seals of this nature; Ning had actually prepared a large pile of them, handing them out to the Ji clan, Autumn Leaf, his master Immortal Diancai, and others.

“Alright.” The silver-haired man rose to his feet. “Then wait for my news.”

“Might I ask how long it will take?” Ning asked.

He could subconsciously sense danger coming, forcing him to train in the Fourth Cycle as quickly as he could. Upon succeeding, his hands would become comparable to supreme top-grade Pure Yang treasures, equivalent to middle-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures. They would be even more powerful than ordinary top-grade Pure Yang treasures, allowing his own strength to once more rapidly skyrocket to a new level. In addition, by relying on his [Three Heads, Six Arms] divine ability, he would have six mighty palms, each of which was comparable to a supreme top-grade Pure Yang treasure.

“It won’t take too long; this is just a trade of treasures. A month should suffice.” The silver-haired man intentionally added a bit of extra padding; in truth, just two or three days could be enough, or perhaps ten days at the most.”

“Alright.” Ning immediately rose to his feet.

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That very night, Ning went to King Yan’s Estate. He was going to live there temporarily, so that he could spend some time with his cousin.

Within an ancient tower.

Five figures were seated in the lotus position, each occupying a different part.

Patriarch Arcanum opened his eyes, glancing at the area. The furrow in his brows grew deeper. Ever since his plan of asking Bloodcloud Hall to assassinate Ji Ning had failed, the Youngflame clan had grown ever-more convinced that Ji Ning was a true danger to them! However...no matter how hard they searched, they couldn't find an opportunity to act against him.

"If this continues, Ji Ning will continue to grow in strength. Once he explodes forth against us...our Youngflame clan will be in a disastrous situation." Patriarch Arcanum was beginning to worry. "And according to what our intelligence reports have discovered...Ji Ning is someone who cares deeply about filial piety. There's no way he'll forget about the grudge his mother bore for us."

"In fact, he was even able to endure the fact that we attempted to kill him in the imperial capital of the Grand Xia."

"This means he is very capable of suppressing himself and biding his time!"

"The reason he has done so is most likely because he feels he is not strong enough yet. Once he feels he is strong enough...our Youngflame clan will probably be in true danger." Patriarch Arcanum's heart was filled with worry.

Originally, all he wanted to do was give vent to his anger. But now...he was beginning to truly worry for his clan. It must be understood that supreme clans and major powers rarely got into true, life-and-death fights against each other! This was because supreme powers generally had Celestial Immortals protecting them. Celestial Immortals possessed truly infinite lifespans; even if one annihilated the enemy's clan, if the enemy Celestial Immortal was to survive, then what in a million years or ten million years, the enemy Celestial Immortal was to launch a sudden sneak attack! After the sneak attack, the Celestial Immortal could vanish for a long time...then launch another one.

If a Celestial Immortal with an infinite lifespan was to devote that entire life to harm a clan...that would be a truly terrifying thing.

Thus...

The more powerful an organization, the more rare it was for them to fight head-on against another such organization! Each would generally prefer to find a path to compromise!

But once they truly were to fight head-on...then they would use their full power to annihilate the enemy completely, or at least wipe out all of the enemy's top-tier fighters!

To the Youngflame clan, Ji Ning now posed a major threat. He was a monster who even Bloodcloud Hall had failed to assassinate successfully...

"Eh?" Suddenly, all five of the Celestial Immortals present opened their eyes.

They all pulled out a similar bronze talisman.

"It's the Seamless Gate," the white-haired, wizened elder said in a low voice.

"The Seamless Gate wishes to meet with our Youngflame clan?" The handsome youth frowned. "What are they going to do? When they previously tried to pull us into their orbit, we refused them. We aren't willing to become enemies with the Seamless Gate, but even less are we willing to betray the Xia Emperor."

"Everyone, I'll make the trip." Patriarch Arcanum rose to his feet. "I'm going to go see what this Seamless Gate wants, exactly."

"Fine."

"We'll leave it in your hands, Arcanum."

"Just delay for now. The Seamless Gate is very powerful; we aren't capable of resisting them."

"Right."

Patriarch Arcanum exited from othat ancient tower, traveling alone.

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Late night. A bright moon was hanging in the skies, bathing the world below with its glow.

A maiden was quietly waiting atop a solitary mountain peak, staring at the bright moon. Behind her were a total of nine golden-robed Celestial Immortals.

“Brother Arcanum, the Exalted Envoy is right there.” A cloud flew towards them, with two figures atop it. One of them was a tall, skinny, narrow-eyed elder; this was Patriarch Arcanum. The other was a golden-robed and seemingly quite amiable elder.

“Eh?”

Patriarch Arcanum stared into the distance, then his pupils contracted. That maiden actually had a total of nine Celestial Immortals with her?

“The Seamless Gate is unreasonably powerful. A single envoy is actually leading a squad of so many Celestial Immortals. I’m afraid that this squad alone is enough to annihilate most supreme clans.” Patriarch Arcanum couldn’t help but feel a surge of cold fear. Although he was quite arrogant and brash in front of others, in front of the Seamless Gate, he still felt nervous.

Patriarch Arcanum landed on the mountain peak, then immediately said, “Arcanum greets you, Envoy.”

Chapter 10: Lying in Wait

“Mm.” Violetgrass nodded lightly.

Patriarch Arcanum secretly inspected her. This young female envoy before him wore golden clothes that were embroidered with eye-catching violet flowers; clearly, she was an extraordinary figure. The Celestial Immortals behind here were all dressed in more ordinary golden clothes; this clearly reflected their lower status.

“Celestial Immortal Arcanum of the Youngflame clan...do you know why I have come looking for you?” Violetgrass said with a laugh.

“Arcanum is unable to guess at your motives, Envoy.” Patriarch Arcanum’s attitude was quite humble.

Violetgrass laughed. “Hahaha...in recent years, our Seamless Gate has helped your Youngflame clan out quite a few times. I trust that by now, you can sense our sincerity. As for our power...although we’ve only revealed a hint of it, you should have sensed how powerful we are. Our Seamless Gate goes where we please and does as we please within the world of the Grand Xia, and what does the imperial Xiamang clan do about it? Just stare at us and watch.”

“Indeed,” Patriarch Arcanum said.

Given how powerful the Seamless Gate was, they definitely knew how mighty the imperial Xiamang clan was, but they still dared to act with such abandon. Without confidence in themselves, would they dare to act this way? None of the Celestial Immortals under their command were fools; the response, or lack thereof, from the imperial Xia clan reflected how powerful the Seamless Gate truly was.

“I can tell you this. In the world of the Grand Xia, many powers have already thrown their support to our Seamless Gate,” Violetgrass said with a sigh. “Their tribes have only grown more powerful after doing so. I can promise you that so long as your Youngflame clan is willing to throw your support to us as well, your power will instantly increase many times over.”

Patriarch Arcanum simply continued to smile.

What a joke.

The only ones throwing their support were lesser powers like the Eastwoods Sect or the Blood God Church. Most likely, very, very few marquises had turned traitor. After all, upon doing so, that meant one would become true enemies with the imperial Xia clan. Behind the imperial Xia clan was Daofather Raindragon and Daofather Crimsonbright! It wouldn't be easy to deal with them! The two Daofathers could probably wipe them out with a wave of the hand.

"I trust that you can tell how sincere our Seamless Gate is, given that I've come in person," Violetgrass said, looking at Arcanum.

"Arcanum is indeed grateful that you have come in person, Envoy. However, this is a matter that could involve the annihilation of my clan. Arcanum does not dare to make this decision without consulting others. Upon my return, I shall definitely inform my other clansmen, and we shall discuss this in detail," Patriarch Arcanum said.

Violetgrass shook her head. "To show our sincerity...I'll tell you something else."

"Pray tell." Patriarch Arcanum's eyes lit up; the Seamless Gate had indeed helped out the Youngflame clan several times recently.

"I heard that your Youngflame clan has a major headache named Ji Ning," Violetgrass said.

"Yes." Patriarch Arcanum admitted it right away. His eyes lit up. "Can it be that you, Envoy, are willing to get rid of Ji Ning for our Youngflame clan? If you get rid of him, we will be endlessly grateful to you."

"Get rid of Ji Ning? That's not impossible. If your Youngflame clan is willing to subordinate yourselves to our Seamless Gate, then within a single day, the Seamless Gate will take his life, regardless of who his backer is." Violetgrass was filled with complete self-confidence. And then, with a half-smile on her face, she said, "If your Youngflame clan isn't willing to support us...then our Seamless Gate can't possibly act on your

behalf."

Patriarch Arcanum was laughing coldly in his heart.

Support them?

Ji Ning was a disaster, true.

But supporting the Seamless Gate would run the risk of true annihilation for the entire clan.

"This Ji Ning has several important friends and family members," Violetgrass said calmly. "If you want to act against him, all you need to do is keep an eye on them; you'll be able to find him eventually."

"But his master, Immortal Diancai, is already a Celestial Immortal." Patriarch Arcanum frowned. "In addition, he's at Stillwater City. As for the important clansmen of the Ji clan, they are few in number and are all in Swallow Mountain. Our Youngflame clan has no chance at all."

"No. He has a junior apprentice-brother named Mu Northson," Violetgrass said. "The two of them are lifelong friends who went through life and death together."

"But Mu Northson has been missing for twenty-plus year." Patriarch Arcanum shook his head.

Violetgrass smiled. "Ji Ning's already rescued him."

Patriarch Arcanum was startled.

The Youngflame clan had already investigated Ji Ning in detail. They had even investigated the likes of Mu Northson and Immortal Diancai in detail. They knew long ago about Immortal Diancai becoming a Celestial Immortal, but they hadn't found any information regarding Northson's return. From this, one could see that the Seamless Gate's intelligence network was much superior to theirs.

"In addition, Mu Northson isn't at Swallow Mountain. Nor is he in Stillwater City." Violetgrass waved her hand, and a leather scroll appeared. She tossed it to Patriarch Arcanum, who hurriedly accepted it.

"Mu Northson's exact location is here on this map," Violetgrass said.

“As long as you keep an eye on him, within a short period of time you shall probably see Ji Ning going to visit him! In fact, if you are in a hurry...you can even kidnap Mu Northson and force Ji Ning to show himself. It’s entirely up to you how your Youngflame clan wishes to proceed.”

“Thank you, Envoy.” Patriarch Arcanum was overjoyed as he stared at this leather-bound scroll.

“Our Seamless Gate has helped your Youngflame clan once again,” Violetgrass said calmly. “Although our Seamless Gate is patient...our patience has a limit. If you continue to refuse to support us...then we will be forced to view you as loyal to the death to the imperial Xia clan. In the future, when we act against the imperial Xia clan...we might very well strike first against your Youngflame clan.”

Patriarch Arcanum’s face changed. He said hurriedly, “Don’t worry, Envoy. I can sense how sincere the Seamless Gate is. There is a good deal of debate within our Youngflame clan about what to do, but of one thing you can be assured; we are definitely not loyal to the death to the imperial Xia clan. Definitely now.”

“What wonderful words.” Violetgrass waved her hand. “Go.”

Only now did Patriarch Arcanum depart.

Soon, the only figures left on that solitary, icy mountain peak were Violetgrass and the ten Celestial Immortals.

“Milord, to have the Youngflame clan deal with Ji Ning...are they strong enough? He’s trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art],” a golden-robed Celestial Immortal whispered.

“Don’t underestimate the Youngflame clan.” Violetgrass shook her head. “The Youngflame clan has existed since the era of Pangu’s Primordial World, eventually migrating here to the world of the Grand Xia. Ancient clan like this all have extremely formidable tools at their disposal. Consider this; in the past, the Kindwater clan fought with the Xiamang clan over the Emperorship of the Grand Xia. The Kindwater clan is a branch of a major clan of Pangu’s Primordial World which had a

group of True Immortals and Empyrean Gods backing them. And yet, although the Kindwater clan and the Youngflame clan have been struggling against each other for so many years, the Youngflame clan has never been wiped out, even though they've suffered a bit. In fact, on the whole, the Youngflame clan has been full of vigor. How can you underestimate the Youngflame clan?"

"Mm." The many Celestial Immortals all nodded.

"Watch and see," Violetgrass said calmly. "We'll let the Youngflame clan use their resources to fight first, while we'll keep watch from the shadows, learning more about Ji Ning's powers and tools. If the Youngflame clan truly is unable to wipe out this Ji Ning, then by then we will still have a high level of information regarding him. Naturally, at that point, we can lay a trap for him, then wipe him out with a single lightning-fast strike."

"If my belief is correct...given that the Youngflame clan is willing to fight against the Kindwater clan to such a degree, they must have an astonishingly formidable background. So long as the Daofather behind Ji Ning doesn't interfere, it shouldn't be hard for them to kill him," Violetgrass said with a laugh.

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The Youngflame clan began to deliberate in secret, coming up with numerous scenarios for killing Ji Ning, in accordance with the intelligence reports they had received.

"This time...let the four of us join forces. Arcanum, Deadwood, Goldclock, and myself, Infatuation, shall fight together." The ancient elder swept the others with his gaze. "The three of you shall be under my command."

"Alright." Patriarch Arcanum nodded.

"Infatuation, we trust you," the man who held a large clock in his hand agreed.

"Right." The white-haired Patriarch Deadwood nodded as well.

Patriarch Infatuation was an ancient man who had a look of hidden grief within his eyes...but his power was truly enormous. Celestial Immortal Infatuation was fairly famous within the Three Realms, and was one of the truly top-tier Celestial Immortals.

“Sunfish, I’ll leave you to protect this tower,” Patriarch Infatuation instructed.

“Fine.” Patriarch Sunfish nodded.

“Let’s go,” Patriarch Infatuation said.

Instantly, Patriarchs Arcanum, Deadwood, and Goldclock followed him in departing.

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It was nighttime. These four Celestial Immortals stealthily made their way to Stillwater Commandery. All four of them were extremely powerful, with Patriarch Infatuation being the strongest. Patriarch Deadwood possessed powerful spells, while Patriarch Goldclock had a powerful magical item; the two were roughly on par with each other. Patriarch Arcanum was actually ranked as the weakest, but he was still quite an excellent Celestial Immortal.

Within Stillwater Commandery. A wild region. Four figures stealthily appeared in the air above a lake.

“Look. Over there.” Patriarch Arcanum pointed towards the distance, where a wooden house could be seen next to a lake. Outside the wooden house, a white-robed youth with some white hair was seated on the stairs, head raised as he stared at the bright moon. He was holding a jade globe in his hands. “Little Xia, today is the sixteenth, right? The moon is actually even rounder than it was yesterday.”

“It really is round. According to the legends, the Fairy of the Moon Palace, Chang’e, lives upon the Lunar Star which is located outside of the Three Realms.” The maiden in the jade globe spoke with some envy. 1

“Right. In the future, when I grow powerful, I’ll take you, Little Xia, to pay a visit to the Lunar Star. We’ll see for ourselves if there really is a

Moon Palace, and if there really is a Chang'e," the white-robed youth said, nodding his head.

The four distant Celestial Immortals had hidden themselves long ago.

"It really is Mu Northson."

"The Seamless Gate's information is accurate."

"Prepare the formations now. After preparing everything, leave the formations un-activated; after Ji Ning arrives, we'll activate them," Patriarch Infatuation immediately ordered.

"Actually, why do we even need formations? Once this greatclock of mine is unleashed, he will perish," the man holding the greatclock said confidently.

"Although this golden clock of yours was transported to this world of the Grand Xia long ago by our Youngflame clan from Pangu's Primordial World, and although it is extremely powerful and a top-grade Pure Yang treasure...this Ji Ning was was able to escape from even Bloodcloud Hall's assassination attempt. We absolutely must not be careless. We have to prepare everything perfectly," Patriarch Infatuation instructed.

And so, the four Celestial Immortals began to prepare their ambush by this lake. Given their abilities, Northson was completely unable to detect them.

Celestial Immortals possessed infinite lifespans, and so they possessed exceptional patience.

.....

The imperial capital of the Grand Xia. King Yan's Estate.

The second day after Ning took up residence within King Yan's Estate. He was accompanying his cousin, Yuchi Xiyue, in strolling about the streets of the estate.

"Leaving? So soon?" Yuchi Xiyue was rather reluctant to let him go. "Didn't you say that Swallow Mountain is protected by layers of formations, and that it is like an impregnable fortress? Isn't it very safe?"

"I'm going to go see my junior apprentice-brother. I feel uneasy," Ning said.

"What do you feel uneasy about?" A voice suddenly rang out.

From around the corner of the stone path, a tall, muscular figure appeared, dressed in loose robes.

"Respectful greetings to you, King Yan," Ning said hurriedly.

"You came to my place, but you plan to leave without even coming to see me?" King Yan said with a laugh. "Come, let's take a walk and have a talk."

Ning and Xiyue both moved to accompany King Yan on the walk, chatting about various important current affairs regarding the Grand Xia as they did. Ning suddenly said, "Senior King Yan, I heard that Daofather Crimsonbright has set up a miniature cycle of reincarnation for his major worlds. Do you know of this matter, senior?" Ning had been wanting to learn more about his parents this entire time.

King Yan was of the imperial clan; he naturally should know about the miniature cycle of reincarnation.

"Of course I do." King Yan nodded, then suddenly said with a chortle, "Could it be that you have forgotten my nickname?"

"Nickname?" Ning was startled.

King Yan's nickname was 'Yama-King'. 2

"After the Daofather rebuilt the cycle of reincarnation, he set it to encompass tens of major worlds and countless minor worlds," King Yan said with a laugh. "His cycle also has ten Yama-Kings, and I am one of them, the Ten Yama-Kings of Hell."

*

1. Chang'e was the wife of the legendary archer, Houyi. Their story is a famous myth in China, with her in most stories (accidentally)

betraying her husband by eating/overdosing on the pill of Immortality and thus floating away to the moon, leaving her husband behind.

2. As explained in Book 11, Chapter 22, in Chinese myth, the Ten Yama Hell-Kings ruled over the netherworld and judged the dead, sending them on their way in the cycle of reincarnation.

Chapter 11: The Youngflame Clan Strikes

“Ah?!” Ji Ning revealed a look of joy.

“Grandpa, you are one of the Ten Yama-Kings of Hell?” The nearby Yuchi Xiyue was startled as well.

King Yan laughed loudly. “Merely one of the ten that are assigned to this minor cycle of reincarnation; we’re only in charge of this region controlled by Daofather Crimsonbright. There are currently many Yama-Kings in the world; there’s nearly a thousand of us. They are not, however, the ten original ones that governed the Netherworld Kingdom...those ten were all at the True Immortal or Empyrean God level.”

“Grandpa, how did you end up as one of the Ten Yama-Kings of Hell?” Yuchi Xiyue asked curiously.

“When the Daofather first re-established the cycle of reincarnation, he needed candidates for the Ten Yama-Kings and for the First Judge of the Dead, and so the various worlds began to propose people. The Grand Xia had to propose a person as well. Because I am of the imperial clan and just became a Celestial Immortal, his Imperial Majesty had me take up the position of Yama-King,” King Yan explained.

Ning understood. Given that he was of the imperial clan and that he had just become a Celestial Immortal, it made sense that he had been chosen to become one of the Ten Yama-Kings of Hell.

Positions such as this, within a minor cycle of reincarnation, actually weren’t that exalted in status. But of course, back in the Netherworld Kingdom, the original Ten Yama-Kings of Hell were in control of all living creatures within the entire Three Realms; their power was truly enormous.

“Ji Ning, why are you asking about the minor cycle of reincarnation? Is there something you need?” King Yan looked at Ning.

“Yes.” Ning nodded. “Senior King Yan, this junior has a matter that I would beseech your assistance with.”

“Speak,” King Yan said.

The imperial clan had always been quite close-knit. Given that the world of the Grand Xia now had several powerful organizations hidden within it, the imperial clan had only become even more close-knit due to the pressure! Since the Xia Emperor had designated Ning as someone that could ‘only be befriended, not be made an enemy’, and since he felt very certain that Ning was most likely the disciple of a Daofather, he had naturally spread the word to all the Celestial Immortals within the imperial clan. King Yan’s attitude towards Ning was now much different compared to the past, prior to the Conclave of Immortal Destiny. Back then, he treated Ning as he would any other junior, but now he treated Ning as someone on the same level as him.

“I trust you know, senior King Yan, that my father Ji Yichuan and my mother Yuchi Snow have already passed away many years ago,” Ning said. “I dearly desire to learn about how my mother and father are currently doing.”

“What’s the point of investigating this?” King Yan looked towards Ning. “After being reborn, they won’t have any memories of their past life.”

“If they are living good, happy lives after their rebirth, I won’t disturb them,” Ning said. “I just want to see for myself...to see if they are doing well and to see if there’s anything I can do for them.”

“Mm.” King Yan nodded. “Fine. Leave this to me. I expect that in a few months, I’ll have an answer for you.”

“A few months?” Ning was startled.

“Do you feel that is a long time?” King Yan laughed.

Ning nodded.

King Yan asked him, “Do you know how many living creatures die every day across these dozens of major worlds and countless minor worlds?”

“But I heard that in the Netherworld Kingdom, such investigations are very fast,” Ning said.

"That's because that place is the Netherworld Kingdom. It was built by Maiden Nuwa herself, and it also holds the treasured Book of Life and Death, which is one with the Dao of the Heavens," King Yan said. "The Book of Life and Death can duplicate itself into trillions of copies, and so it controlled the reincarnation, karmic merit, history, and life of all living things. But what we have here is merely a minor cycle of reincarnation established by Daofather Crimsonbright. We don't have a Book of Life and Death! Thus, our minor cycle of reincarnation is actually even busier than the old one."

"The process of simply recording the countless deaths and rebirths of the world, as well as karmic virtues and demerits, requires enormous amounts of information to be recorded every single day on magic books," King Yan said. "And we only have roughly a hundred years of information; anything beyond that is completely lost."

"Completely lost?" Ning was stunned.

"Right. There's no way for us to investigate the records that existed before the Six Paths of Reincarnation were destroyed. Although we can go to the Netherworld Kingdom to seek out the First Judge of the Dead, Judge Cui, in order to investigate the history of a soul across a thousand lifetimes...the amount of information and history regarding every single person is simply enormous. There's simply no way for us to record all the history regarding the countless living creatures that exist across countless millions of worlds. And so, we don't even bother with it," King Yan explained.

"In fact, nowadays the Judges for the various minor cycles of reincarnation don't even bother with wasting time on examining the past lives of the souls of the dead. They just look at karma, then based on positive karma or negative sin, decide if a person will be reincarnated as an animal or as a person, and if the person will be reincarnated with wealth or into poverty."

Ning was speechless.

When he had met Judge Cui, Judge Cui had instantly known everything

that had happened to him during his previous life.

But the judges of this minor cycle of reincarnation only looked at karma and sin; they didn't even look at a person's life history! Still...this did speed things up considerably.

"I'll send someone to help investigate on your behalf. Still...to search through the sea-like mass of records to find the specific history-tablets pertaining to your parents will indeed take some time," King Yan said.

"Thank you, senior," Ning said hurriedly with gratitude. Only now did he understand the magnitude of his request to search for someone who had been reincarnated.

Several months? So be it.

"Senior, where can one find the First Judge of the Dead of the Netherworld Kingdom, Judge Cui?" Ning asked.

"You want to find Judge Cui? He might be in the Deva Realm, or he might be in the Netherworld Kingdom, or he might be somewhere else." King Yan shook his head. "Ever since the Six Paths of Reincarnation were destroyed, Judge Cui no longer had any tasks shackling him to a specific place. Given that the Book of Life and Death protects him, he can go wherever he pleases. If you want to investigate his whereabouts, you'll need to ask the Immortals of the Deva Realm or the Netherworld, I imagine."

It was a dark, gloomy day today. Ning departed from the imperial capital of the Grand Xia, returning to Stillwater Commandery.

"In a few more months, I'll be able to know what happened to Mother and Father after they were reborn." Ning's heart was filled with hope. "I wonder if they are doing well. Are they Immortal cultivators in this life as well? Which world are they living in, in this new life? Is it still the Grand Xia?"

The skies were desolate and bleak.

Ning flew towards a distant lake. From afar, he could see the wooden house that was located next to it, the residence of his junior apprentice-

brother, Mu Northson.

“Alas.” Ning sighed to himself.

His junior apprentice-brother had no family to begin with...and now, his one and only Dao-companion had been trapped within that jade globe. Every day, Northson hugged that jade globe and talked to it. Ning was very worried for his junior apprentice-brother’s Dao-heart. If this were to continue long-term...eventually, his Dao-heart might crumble, at which point he might go crazy and be unable to control his elemental ki, possibly resulting in self-detonation and death.

.....

“He’s coming.”

Within the wild grasses next to the lake, the four Celestial Immortal Patriarchs that were seated in the lotus position all opened their eyes to stare at that figure that had appeared in the distant horizons.

It was a youth who was riding the winds...Ji Ning, the source of trouble which their Youngflame clan had come for!

“He came so quickly. It seems this Ji Ning has a very deep relationship with Mu Northson,” Patriarch Arcanum sneered. “I had thought we’d have to wait for a year or two. The Heavens truly are helping our Youngflame clan!”

“The Heavens are supporting us in eradicating this danger,” Patriarch Deadwood growled as well.

“Our chance has come.” The man holding the greatclock cracked his lips in a grin as well.

As for Patriarch Infatuation, a flash of cold light crossed his eyes.

This was their best-case scenario; after all, Immortal cultivators could go into closed-door meditation sessions and stay in them for extremely long periods of time. They had no idea how long it would be before Ji Ning would come to visit Mu Northson again. If they truly did have to wait for several years or a decade...they would probably end up choosing to

capture Northson instead! They'd use him as a hostage, forcing Ji Ning to show himself...but in doing so, Ji Ning would be forewarned and might even bring his friends, such as his fellow disciples from that mysterious school he was from, or the likes of Immortal Diancai. That would render it very difficult for them to kill him.

"He's completely unprepared right now." A cold look was in Patriarch Infatuation's eyes. "This is our best chance."

"Right." The other three Patriarchs nodded as well.

"Act according to our plans." Patriarch Arcanum stared towards the distant Ning as he flew towards the wooden house. "This is the time. Attack!"

Ning was in midair. Through the open wooden door and open windows, he could see Northson within the wooden house. Northson had placed the jade globe on the table in front of him, and was chatting with it while drinking.

"He's still chatting with Yu Xia's soul?" Seeing this, Ning couldn't help but feel even more pain and worry. "If this continues...how can he possibly prevent his Dao-heart from collapsing?"

Mortals were allowed to grow dispirited and depressed...but when Immortal cultivators did so, it would be extremely dangerous. It was one thing for Fiendgod Body Refiners; after all, even if their elemental ki exploded, their bodies would be able to withstand the damage. But his junior apprentice-brother Northson was merely a Ki Refiner; an explosion of elemental ki could be more than enough to cause him to perish.

"Junior apprentice-brother!" Ning called out loudly.

Northson, within the wooden home, picked up the jade globe. He walked to the doorway, raised his head, then smiled and called out, "Senior apprentice-brother!"

Right at this moment...

Ruuuuuuuumble.

A powerful yet mysterious ripple instantly spread out from nearby. Like the rays of the sun, the strange ripple instantly encompassed the entire area, including Northson, the jade globe, and Ning.

Ning felt as though his soul had suffered a powerful blow, but his Dao-heart was incomparably resilient. In addition, his Fiendgod body had become completely fused with his soul, rendering it even more stable; he was naturally able to withstand this collision.

"Not good. My junior apprentice-brother!" Ning was shocked.

He had been able to withstand the blow, yes...but would Northson be able to withstand it? Northson had only recently reached the Void-level and become an Earth Immortal; he could only be considered an extremely ordinary Loose Immortal. Would he be able to hold?

"They..." As Ning turned his gaze towards his junior apprentice-brother, he also saw that far away, in the desolate plains, four figures had suddenly appeared. Given that he had read an intelligence report regarding the Youngflame clan long ago, Ning was shocked. "Celestial Immortals Infatuation, Arcanum, Goldclock, and Deadwood? Four Celestial Immortals?"

This coresense attack had been personally executed by Patriarch Infatuation.

.....

In the face of this terrifying coresense attack, the female soul within the jade globe was completely unable to resist. Her soul was, after all, merely the soul of a Wanxiang Adept; it was far too weak.

Like snow melting away under the rays of the sun...she evaporated away into nothingness.

In the instant that she evaporated away, she stared at Mu Northson. Simply stared at him...

.....

As Northson suffered the coresense attack, he almost automatically

summoned his own power to resist...but before his very eyes, the jade-trapped soul that he loved melted away into nothingness before him.

"NO!!!!!" Northson's eyes instantly turned red. Blood vessels could be seen within them, and two bloody tears came falling out. He let out an utterly agonized and inhuman scream, a howl that was akin to the roar of a dying beast.

.....

Faced with the coresense attack of Patriarch Arcanum, Ji Ning was able to withstand it, Yu Xia's soul was melted away, and Northson was sent into madness.

Northson raised his head, staring at the four incomparably powerful Celestial Immortals in the distance, his eyes filled with madness. "IT WAS YOU! ALL OF YOU WILL DIE!!!"

BANG!

An enormous Winged Immortal golem suddenly appeared behind him. Northson instantly merged into the body of the Winged Immortal golem, and its aura instantly exploded with power. As a grandmaster of constructs and one who had even personally made this sort of Winged Immortal golem before...

Under the maddened control of a grandmaster, the Winged Immortal golem became activated. Instantly, a series of wild gusts of wind appeared in the surrounding area. The gale smashed apart everything before it, and within the gale could be seen multiple spots of black light. Just looking at those spots was enough to cause a man to sink into oblivion.

Chapter 12: Four Mighty Celestial Immortals

“Arise!” The tall, skinny Patriarch Arcanum let out a cold shout.

Instantly, clouds began to gather from thousands of kilometers around. The world turned dark, the Five Elements were thrown into a state of chaos, and space became locked. No matter how violent the battle in the area became, it would be difficult for any spatial ripples to leak out!

“Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds? A puny Void-level Earth Immortal actually has a precious golem like this? What a waste!” Patriarch Arcanum let out a cold laugh. Instantly, a series of starlight began to appear, along with multiple meteors that flew out. A total of 360 meteorites instantly flew high into the air.

These 360 meteorites made up Patriarch Arcanum’s true power. For the sake of killing Ji Ning, he had brought them out right away.

In midair, the illusion of 360 flowing stars could be seen. For countless ages now, the movement of stars in the night sky had been fixed and eternal. When this grand formation appeared...instantly, a layer of thick starlight appeared, completely blocking the wild electric wind.

“All of you, die, die, DIE!!!!” The Winged Immortal golem was in an absolutely berserk state as it released the Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds repeatedly...

The Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds were exceedingly powerful; even using all of his power, Patriarch Arcanum was only able to just barely block them. “Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds of such purity...this golem is allowing a mere Void-level Earth Immortal to block me. For such a precious golem to be in the hands of this Northson is truly a waste. If I had it, my power would increase dramatically.”

The power of a golem was directly related to the power of its user.

There naturally would be a difference in power in the Seven Ruinous Winds as activated by Void-level elemental ki or Celestial Immortal-level

elemental ki! By relying on the Winged Immortal golem, Northson could reach a Celestial Immortal's level of power...but in the hands of a true Celestial Immortal, the power would increase by at least two levels!

.....

As Patriarch Arcanum struck out, one of the other Patriarchs struck out as well. It was the elderly, white-haired Patriarch Deadwood.

The elderly Patriarch's hands formed together into a seal, and a series of powerful ripples seemed to merge with the earth itself, becoming one with the nearby grass and trees.

In truth, Patriarch Deadwood was an oddity even amongst Celestial Immortals, because the vast majority of them needed to use magic treasures. Patriarch Deadwood, in his youth, was looked down upon due to his lack of talent, and the clan gave him very few resources; in fact, he couldn't even procure any decent magic treasures. He was the stubborn sort, and he decided to focus all of his attention on magic spells.

No one would have imagined that he would manage to complete a Dao that was different from all others, one which only grew stronger as he moved further along it. All of the various 'geniuses' of his era failed and perished, while he actually overcome his tribulation to become a Celestial Immortal, and an extraordinary one at that. In the Youngflame clan, even Patriarch Goldclock, who had acquired their most precious treasure, was merely on par with him.

"Attack!" A single word came forth from Patriarch Deadwood's lips.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

Instantly, the colors of the world seemed to change. The nearby lake shook, and the wild plains trembled. Enormous, thick, wood-green tendrils erupted forth from the surface of the lake and from the wild plains. A total of nine tendrils erupted forth, each of which was covered with flowing golden light and with ancient runes.

The nine tendrils soared into the heavens, each of them fathomless in length. They simultaneously struck towards the Winged Immortal golem

and towards Ji Ning.

This took time to describe, but in reality, Northson's unleashing of the Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds, Patriarch Arcanum's usage of the Starlight Revolution formation to block, and Patriarch Deadwood's unleashing of his nine tendrils happened almost simultaneously.

Whoosh. The Winged Immortal golem continued to release the Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds while it flew through the air at high speed, avoiding the striking tendrils.

Every single tendril was like one of the pillars of heaven; they were incomparably thick and massive, and they also moved at incomparable speed.

The Winged Immortal golem was dodging at high speed. Just as it had clearly dodged a blow...the incomparably massive tendril suddenly sprouted many branches that were much thinner but extremely numerous. The tight cluster of tendrils erupted forth from the main tendril like a series of serpents, instantly entangling and catching the Winged Immortal golem.

"F*ck off, f*ck off!" The Winged Immortal struggled to resist, continuously releasing the Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds, but starlight descended, blocking a good part of it.

Even though some of the smaller branches were destroyed by the Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds, new ones quickly sprouted out. The Winged Immortal golem sank into a prison of tendrils...and no matter how it struggled, it was unable to escape.

.....

A total of nine tendrils were used to attack. Just a single one of them was used to trap the Winged Immortal golem; the rest were acting against Ning.

Ning was currently filled with both guilt and rage!

"Junior apprentice-brother." Ning's heart was filled with the utmost regret; as soon as he had seen the four mighty Celestial Immortals

appear, he had understood everything. The four of them had been lying in wait here the entire time, but had only acted after Ning had appeared. Given that they were all of the Youngflame clan...without question, they were here for him. His junior apprentice-brother was simply caught in the crossfire.

His junior apprentice-brother had cared deeply about his Dao-companion's soul; Ning knew this very well. Upon seeing tears of blood streak down his junior apprentice-brother's face, Ning's own heart clenched with pain.

Next came rage!

Incomparable rage!

"YOUNGFLAME CLAN!!!" When Ning saw Patriarch Arcanum and Patriarch Deadwood unleash their abilities, he similarly unleashed his own as well.

Whoosh!

A black-robed Ning appeared by his side. His true body and his Primaltwin now stood shoulder-to-shoulder in midair. Simultaneously, they manifested more than three hundred top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords to appear around them. The guilt-wracked and infuriated Ning instantly unleashed his most powerful killing attack.

[Greater Thousand Swords Formation] – Stage Four!

A large amount of sword-ki coalesced in front of Ning's chest, transforming into a golden flying sword.

"KILL!!!" His true body and his Primaltwin let out simultaneous, enraged roars.

ROAAAAR!

A divine black dragon appeared, raising its head out and unleashing an angry roar. It was the golden flying sword in draconic form. The divine black dragon, carrying a terrifyingly sharp aura, swept forward...and meeting it was an incomparably thick tendril, which slapped down with

power that seemed great enough to shake the heavens and the earth. Even though the divine black dragon was incomparably agile as it moved to try and dodge past so as to help Northson...the tendril was also extremely agile, and it gave birth to many smaller branches that moved to impede the divine black dragon.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh...

A large amount of smaller branches were chopped apart, and a scar appeared on the body of the thick main tendril as well. And then...crack! It completely snapped apart.

Ning and his Primaltwin manifested a second streak of sword-light. A second divine black dragon flew out! Simultaneously controlling two streaks of sword-light generated from the fourth stage of the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation]; this was Ning's current maximum.

ROAAAAR!

The two divine black dragons moved as fast as lightning, slamming against the many tendrils. Thanks to the resistance from the tendrils, one of the divine black dragons was consumed and shattered, but the other one managed to slaughter a path to the Winged Immortal golem, tearing the tendrils apart and saving the golem.

“What?!” The four Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan, upon seeing this, narrowed their eyes. “This Ji Ning is actually as powerful as this? He would be considered an excellent fighter amongst Celestial Immortals.”

“Fortunately, thanks to Bloodcloud Hall’s failed assassination attempt, we’ve known this entire time that he is extremely powerful, and so we came prepared.”

Still, the four Celestial Immortals didn’t panic in the slightest.

“Forest!” Patriarch Deadwood’s eyelids twitched slightly, and a golden light began to flow within his eyes as he once more called out a word.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

From the lake and from the wild plains, a large number of tendrils began to appear. These tendrils were far thinner than the nine great tendrils that had appeared earlier; they were roughly just one percent of the originals in size. However, they were extremely numerous, and each was still at least a hundred kilometers long. The world had suddenly been transformed into a forest of tendrils.

The countless tendrils began to frantically wrap themselves around the nine main tendrils.

Ning's two divine black dragons, formed through using the fourth stage of the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation], were only able to strike around the margins. They were blocked repeatedly, and they only had enough strength to fight back, not to advance any further.

Whooooosh. By Ning's side, Northson repeatedly unleashed the Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds, but Patriarch Arcanum's grand formation of starlight suppressed the wind time and time again.

.....

A single person, Patriarch Deadwood, was able to suppress both Ning and Northson; this was the power of a truly formidable Celestial Immortal! The general who had commanded the Eastwoods mountain range was even more formidable than Patriarch Deadwood; he was capable of completely suppressing and even defeating Ning. However, because he was unable to bind Ning, he was forced to negotiate with him.

Although Patriarch Deadwood was comparatively weaker, he was still able to suppress the two of them. With Patriarch Arcanum supporting him, the two made it impossible for Ning to even have a chance to use a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal.

Bang! A talisman suddenly appeared before Ning. A divine black dragon howled past it, and a thick streak of sword-light instantly shattered it.

Stillwater City.

It was in the afternoon, but the skies were rather dark and dreary.

"Not good!"

“It’s Ji Ning.”

Two figures simultaneously appeared in the skies above Stillwater City. The first was a hunchbacked, staff-wielding elder, Celestial Immortal Hunchmont. The other was the black-haired, black-robed Immortal Diancai. Both had shocked looks on their faces. It must be understood that when Immortal Diancai and Ji Ning agreed to ally with the Northmont clan of Stillwater, they had naturally prepared methods of helping each other out as needed. Everyone had a talisman for everyone else; upon shattering it, the others would be able to sense it right away.

“Ji Ning’s power is formidable; what sort of situation could force him to request help??” Immortal Diancai was greatly shocked.

“It’s within Stillwater Commandery, roughly a few hundred thousand kilometers away,” Celestial Immortal Hunchmont sent mentally.

“Let’s hurry over there.” Immortal Diancai had a solemn look on his face.

“Right.” The two didn’t hesitate at all; they immediately used void blink techniques to hurry over.

Although the most powerful member of the Northmont clan of Stillwater was actually that ancient elder, his existence was a tightly-kept secret. Unless something truly critical happened, he wouldn’t reveal himself. Only if even Immortal Hunchmont and Immortal Diancai were unable to rescue Ning would he intervene.

.....

The world of the Grand Xia. Upon an island in the western seas.

This was a seemingly barren, unpopulated island. In truth...it was surrounded by layers of formations, causing outsiders to be unable to see the truth of what was within.

Within a mountain on the island. Inside a palace.

A maiden was seated on a royal throne here. In the center of the palace was an enormous mirror, a Pure Yang treasure known as the Divine

Earthpiercer Mirror. This enormous mirror was currently displaying the battle that was happening far away, next to the lake.

"The Youngflame clan has made their move." The maiden revealed a smile. "And even Celestial Immortal Infatuation has gone...and they brought a top-grade Pure Yang divine greatclock..."

There were more than ten gold-robed Celestial Immortals within the palace who were also staring at that giant mirror as they watched the battle within it.

Chapter 13: Suppressing the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]

As soon as Ji Ning exchanged blows with them, he had a bad feeling. Patriarch Deadwood and Patriarch Arcanum alone were able to completely suppress him and his junior apprentice-brother. “Not even the fourth stage of the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation] is able to overcome them. If I was also a Celestial Immortal and was able to use Celestial Immortal-level elemental ki in activating the fourth stage of the [Greater Thousand Swords Formation]...things would probably be different. It’s simply too taxing for Void-level Earth Immortals to battle Celestial Immortals.”

And so, not hesitating at all, Ning shattered the talisman, requesting aid from his master Immortal Diancai and Celestial Immortal Hunchmont.

“A message-talisman.”

“Ji Ning is asking for aid.”

“Quick.”

All four of the Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan were watching this battle. They naturally noticed how the divine black dragon of sword-light had suddenly shattered a talisman.

“Let me handle it.” The man holding the greatclock in his hand let out an angry roar, then waved the clock-wielding hand. The greatclock instantly soared high into the skies. The many tendrils that were blocking out the sun opened a path for it, and so the greatclock transformed into a rainbow that instantly flew to a location a few kilometers away from Ning.

It hovered there in the air, its surface radiating a blurry golden light.

The man controlling the golden greatclock instantly used his own power to activate this top-grade Pure Yang artifact. This was an artifact which the Youngflame clan had come into possession of back during the era of Pangu’s Primordial World; it had been passed down for countless years,

and was one of the artifacts that was meant to safeguard the entire clan.

Claaaaaang.

The golden clock suddenly emitted a ringing sound. The sound of the clock spread out in a slow manner. The base of the golden greatclock was aimed straight towards Ning, and as the clock rang out, circles of golden ripples that were visible to the naked eye appeared around it.

The circles radiated downwards, while the nearby tendrils quickly retreated, beating out a path for it, with the slower-moving tendrils instantly transformed into dust.

The golden ripples of light moved at an extremely fast speed. By the time Ning saw them, they had already nearly reached him.

“Careful!” Ning called out in shock, quickly willing the nearby black-robed Ning to disappear into thin air.

Claaaaaang.

The golden ripples of light shattered apart one of the divine black dragons, then struck towards Ning’s body, at which point it once more let out a slow, gonging sound. Ning felt as though countless heavy hammers were smashing against his body.

The nearby Mu Northson, who was in control of the Winged Immortal golem, was partially hit by the attack as well. The Winged Immortal golem was instantly knocked flying, spinning out of his control. Right at this moment, two of the nine incomparably massive main tendrils came snaking towards the Winged Immortal golem.

“Junior apprentice-brother.” Ning immediately stretched his hand out, his palm increasing to a size of three hundred meters as he grabbed the somersaulting Winged Immortal golem. “Don’t resist.” He immediately brought the Winged Immortal golem back into his own mobile Immortal estate.

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The appearance of the golden clock forced the Primaltwin to retreat,

while the Winged Immortal golem had already been finding it hard enough to deal with the ‘Starlight Revolution’; there was no way it could fight back at all now. Ning’s only choice was to have both his Primaltwin and his junior apprentice-brother retreat for now, leaving his true body to stand there by itself.

“Hahaha...” The man controlling the golden greatclocked roared with laughter. “With my divine clock having emerged...death is the only outcome for you.”

“What terrifying power.” Ning’s heart was filled with shock.

Patriarch Deadwood and Patriarch Goldclock were polar opposites; Patriarch Deadwood focused on control, suppression, and binding, whereas Patriarch Goldclock focused on raw power and straightforward crushing! In truth, as far as Ji Ning was concerned, Patriarch Deadwood was actually a greater threat to him! This was because, once he became bound and restricted by those tendrils, he’d find it very difficult to escape, even though he trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]!

Dong! Dong! Dong!

The golden greatclock rang out in the skies, and the golden ripples of power struck towards Ning repeatedly.

By now, Ning had completely withdrawn all of his three hundred-plus Immortal swords. He had executed his divine ability, [Three Heads, Six Arms], and was relying on his six mighty palms to block.

The golden ripple of light struck out...but Ning was completely unharmed!

“Hmph.” Patriarch Arcanum controlled the Starlight Revolution to attack, but Ning completely ignored it, allowing it to fall against his body as it pleased.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh...

An enormous number of tendrils came crashing over.

Only now did Ning begin to take things seriously. He executed his divine

ability, [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens], seeming to have transformed into a gust of wind. He was occasionally drifting and gentle, but occasionally savage and vicious in his movements. He shuttled through the tendrils in an unpredictable manner, while his six arms all used the [Starseizing Hand]. With unearthly power in his hands, comparable to that of Pure Yang treasures, he chopped with his palms in every direction!

Bang! Bang! Bang! The weaker tendrils and vines were blasted apart into dust; only the thicker tendrils were able to resist.

And thanks to his [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens], Ning remained extremely agile and dodged about easily.

“How can this be?”

“Impossible!”

Patriarch Arcanum and Patriarch Goldclock were both shocked. Their attacks were actually very weak against Ning?! Patriarch Goldclock was especially shocked; his power was on the same level as Patriarch Deadwood's, but Ning was able to completely resist the power of his attacks head-on...and was even able to borrow from the momentum of the clock-strikes to increase his speed.

“This golden greatclock of mine is a top-grade Pure Yang treasure with extraordinary power; not even Celestial Immortals would dare to take it on head-on. Even if a Void-level Fiendgod were to encounter it, the only outcome would be death.” Patriarch Goldclock couldn't believe it.

“He must have some protective treasure?” Patriarch Arcanum said.

“Even if he did, once it suffered an attack from my golden clock, it would instantly have its power used up.” Patriarch Goldclock truly couldn't believe it.

After Patriarch Goldclock struck, the last of the four mighty Celestial Immortals, Patriarch Infatuation, began to launch a full-strength attack as well. Cold spheres of light began to manifest in the area around Patriarch Infatuation. These cold spheres of light numbered in the

thousands as they hung around him, with flowing runes appearing on their surface. The flowing runes joined together, forming into an incomparably profound formation.

Rumble...

The area within three thousand meters of Patriarch Infatuation had been completely transformed into a world of frozen ice.

There was frozen ice everywhere. Patriarch Infatuation stood at the very peak of a tower made of frozen ice, like the only sovereign of this miniature world of ice.

“Chop!” Patriarch Infatuation looked at the distant Ji Ning, who was fleeing from the strikes of the golden greatclock and the giant tendrils. He pointed at him.

Instantly, more than half of the ice within this miniature frozen world began to gather in one location, forming into an enormous chopping sword of frozen ice. This was like the blade of an executioner...but it only had a blade, without a handle. This enormous executioner’s blade of frozen ice instantly slashed through the skies, chopping straight towards Ji Ning.

Ning, currently using the [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens], raised his head and saw the enormous executioner’s blade of ice crashing down upon him.

Cold!

He felt a heart-piercing cold. Even before the executioner’s blade had fallen upon him, Ning felt a cold pain, misery, and fear fill his heart as he stared at it. This was a sort of fear and pain that one would naturally feel upon seeing that executioner’s blade.

“What a bizarre blade.” Ning felt that something was off. He immediately let out an angry roar: “F*CK OFF!”

Two of Ning’s massive hands punched straight upwards, looking like Pangu pushing up the heavens. 1

The enormous freezing executioner's blade came crashing down!

BANG!!!

The executioner's blade collided head-on with Ning's twin hands!

Ning was blasted downwards by the power of the blow, like a meteor sinking into the ground. Ning had never before suffered an attack of such terrifying power. Even back in the Eastwoods mountain range, he had never received such a disastrously mighty chop.

"What? He didn't die?" Patriarch Infatuation could hardly believe it. This technique of his, which he had used to roam and dominate the Three Realms, had been unable to kill Ji Ning? This blow was so powerful that even some Heaven-ranked magic treasures would be instantly blown apart.

"There's no way a protective item could last for so long. Could it be that he's using his body to block?"

"The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]!!!" Patriarch Infatuation was suddenly shocked as he thought of this possibility.

Moments later, he became certain that this was correct; there was a very high chance that Ning had trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]! This was because after Ning had suffered the first assassination attempt from Bloodcloud Hall, Bloodcloud Hall had actually dared to increase the price to an exponential level; this indicated that Ning probably wasn't just relying on a protective treasure. Only the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] made sense.

"So what if he has the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]? He's still only at the Void level; he won't be able to escape from the combined attacks of us four Celestial Immortals." Patriarch Infatuation instantly sent mentally to the other three, "It is very likely that this Ji Ning has trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]. Deadwood, focus on binding him. Goldclock, draw him into your golden greatclock and keep him suppressed within it."

"Alright."

"Alright."

.....

Ning was sent slamming downwards from the force of that frozen executioner's blade. Rustle rustle rustle...instantly, the enormous rattan vines came twirling towards him.

"Not good." The power of that chop had been simply too great; he was about to be trapped and entangled by those thick rattan vines. Ning gritted his teeth.

BOOM!

As Ning landed, his body suddenly separated into two as it was instantly torn apart, diving into two separate bodies. The two Nings slammed their palms into each other, and with a massive boom, borrowed from the momentum of the blow to send each other flying away at high speed, avoiding the many tendrils that were coiling towards them from below.

"He split his body?"

"He's looking to die."

Patriarch Deadwood let out a cold laugh.

Although this instantaneous creation of a clone had seemingly allowed him to dodge that trap, both of the clone bodies would now be much weaker; after all, each of the two bodies would only possess half of the soul that had been infused into every cell of the original body, and so the power of any sword-arts would also be dramatically lowered. Even the intricacy and effect of the [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens] would be lowered! These were all weaknesses.

And once one of the clones was destroyed, the divine power within that particular clone would be completely used up.

BOOM! One of the Nings suddenly blew up.

The power of the other fleeing Ning instantly skyrocketed. A large amount of divine power was returning to him, and his divine soul was rapidly healing as well. Fiendgod Body Refiners...so long as their divine power was not used up, they could regenerate from as little as a single

drop of blood.

"Quite decisive." Patriarch Infatuation, standing atop his tower of frozen ice within his miniature ice realm, let out a cold laugh. "Let's see how many times you can self-detonate."

He pointed once more.

Instantly, that enormous frozen executioner's blade once more swung over, quickly arriving in the air above Ning.

Ning gritted his teeth.

What was he to do?

Earlier, he had instantly split his body into two clones, then self-detonated one to recover part of his divine power...but this still used up a lot of divine power. That single self-detonation had already consumed twenty or thirty percent of Ning's total power. This was a far faster rate of depletion than when he had been fighting; after three or four more self-detonations, he would be finished.

"What should I do?" Ning began to grow nervous. Hide within his mobile Immortal estate and use a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal to escape?

This was a seemingly good solution, but it was dangerous as well. Would his mobile Immortal estate be able to withstand the attacks of Celestial Immortal Infatuation and the other three?

Although his mobile Immortal estates was described as an 'Immortal estates', it wasn't actually an Immortal-ranked magic treasure; if it had been, Ning wouldn't have been able to bind it in the past! Treasures of this sort were mobile but did not possess significant defensive power. This one was roughly on par with Heaven-ranked magic treasures. Against Bloodcloud Hall's Ba-Serpent, Ning had felt that it should be able to resist for a short period of time.

But in the face of the far more powerful Celestial Immortal Infatuation, who was being aided by three more Celestial Immortals...it might instantly be blasted apart.

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1. According to Chinese mythology, heaven and earth used to be an indivisible whole in the cosmic egg. In Pangu's creation of the universe, he literally lifted up the heavens away from the earth, forming the universe.

Chapter 14: A Feud As Fathomless as a Sea of Blood

A spatial ripple suddenly appeared in the skies above the desolate plains. Two figures emerged from the spatial ripple; a staff-wielding Celestial Immortal Hunchmont, and a black-robed, black-haired Immortal Diancai.

“It’s up ahead.”

“But there’s a formation covering that area.”

Celestial Immortal Hunchmont and Immortal Diancai immediately released their coresense, using it to cover an area of tens of thousands of kilometers; they were naturally able to discover that large formation. The formations which the four Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan had set up here weren’t meant to be used to guard their headquarters; naturally, they wouldn’t pay too high of a price for them. These formations were merely meant for trapping enemies by mystifying them, barring spatial ripples, and causing enemies to be unable to use void blink techniques to escape; they were unable to completely block out the coresense of a determined Celestial Immortal.

“Ji Ning!” Both were shocked by what their coresense found.

They saw Ning, with three heads and six arms, suffering repeated attacks from four mighty Celestial Immortals within that grand formation.

Patriarch Arcanum used the Starlight Revolution to negatively impact Ning’s movements time and time again.

Patriarch Goldclock was using his top-grade Pure Yang greatclock in an attempt to trap and suppress Ning within it.

Patriarch Infatuation was continuing to unleash the full power of his miniature frozen world with every blow, beating Ning senseless and giving him no chance to fight back at all; he was a truly supreme Celestial Immortal.

Patriarch Deadwood was controlling countless tendrils and vines in an attempt to bind and constrict Ning.

Although he had the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], Ning was being forced to rely on body-separation, followed by self-detonation, something which he wouldn't be able to sustain for very long.

"Hurry up and break the formation." Celestial Immortal Hunchmont was shocked and worried. "Diancai, this great formation is mainly focused inwards and doesn't have much resistance to outside attacks. If the two of us join together, we can break it open through raw force."

"Alright." Immortal Diancai was frantic as well.

"Let's go."

Immortal Diancai pointed from far away. Instantly, five Immortal swords appeared out of nowhere, instantly piercing through the skies, transforming into five dazzling rainbows of light. Every single sword manifested the illusion of a giant mountain...and moments later, the five illusory mountains actually joined together, transforming into a single enormous mountain with five peaks! These five peaks were like five fingers of different colors that carried the intent of utter extermination.

Five Elements Sword – Minor Five Elements Extermination!

"Mountainshift!" Celestial Immortal Hunchmont released a low growl as well. A total of nine massive seals appeared out of nowhere, each of which flew out at high speed and transformed into a massive mountain. These nine massive mountains were different in appearance, with some being towering, some being squat, and some being sharp. They were completely different from Immortal Diancai's swords, as they were not illusory; rather, they were nine true mountain peaks.

In addition, around the nine true mountains, a host of illusory mountains could be seen as well. A total of eighty-one such illusory mountain peaks appeared..

It was like an entire mountain range was crashing down!

The reason why Celestial Immortal Hunchmont's nickname was

'Hunchmont' was precisely because he relied on this supreme ability of his, the [Mountainbringer] technique.

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The illusory five-peaked mountain of sword-light radiated an aura of extermination, while the nine true mountain peaks carried eighty-one illusory mountain peaks with them as they came crashing down with raw force.

The two joined together...and the formation flags which the Celestial Immortals had spread throughout the region were instantly shattered apart. Even the desolate plains themselves had massive, jagged scars blasted into them.

Both figures were extraordinary in their power.

Immortal Diancai had become a Celestial Immortal after undergoing six nine-sets of thunder tribulation; his sword-art, the 'Minor Five Elements Extermination', was on a level that was even higher than Ning's own sword-arts! In addition, he was using five top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords to execute his technique. Ning's fourth stage of his [Greater Thousand Swords Formation] was probably roughly on par with his master's techniques in terms of sword-arts, but Immortal Diancai was now a Celestial Immortal...naturally, his power was much greater, due to the fact that he was using Celestial Immortal-level power.

As for Celestial Immortal Hunchmont, he was also on the same level as Patriarch Deadwood and Patriarch Goldclock; he, too, was more powerful than Ning.

And the two of them had just joined forces!

Naturally, they were able to completely smash apart that grand formation.

"Not good."

"Our formation's been destroyed."

"The newcomers are Hunchmont of the Northmont clan and Immortal

Diancai of the Black-White College,” Patriarch Arcanum sent frantically.

“Infatuation, what should we do now?” Patriarch Goldclock sent a frantic mental message as well.

“Damn!” Patriarch Infatuation had an ugly look on his face. He stared at the distant Ji Ning, who was frantically dodging past the many tendrils in an attempt to buy as much time as possible. What he saw made him feel all the more unwilling to give up; although Ji Ning had trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], his foundation was far too weak. Patriarch Infatuation was now certain that if the four of them were given just a bit more time, they would be able to suppress and trap Ji Ning within the divine greatclock!

Once trapped and suppressed within that top-grade Pure Yang treasure, even True Immortals or Empyrean Gods would be unable to escape, to say nothing of Ji Ning.

But of course...a True Immortal or Empyrean God wouldn’t be so stupid as to let themselves be trapped within.

Rumble...

The five-peaked mountain of sword-light carried an incomparably fierce aura.

The nine true mountains carried a host of illusory mountains as they came crashing forward.

There was nothing to stop them.

“Damn, damn, DAMN!!!” Patriarch Infatuation was both frantic and enraged; they were so very close to victory! However, he knew that the appearance of Celestial Immortal Hunchmont and Immortal Diancai meant that they were now unable to suppress Ji Ning. After all, Ji Ning had trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]; they were unable to kill him, and would only be able to suppress and trap him.

They no longer had the time necessary to do that.

“Leave!” Patriarch Infatuation sent with an angry roar. “Let’s leave.”

“Damnit.” Patriarch Goldclock and Patriarch Deadwood felt similarly unwilling to just give up like this.

“If we had just a few extra moments, Ji Ning would’ve been finished.” Patriarch Arcanum was unbelievably frustrated as well.

“Celestial Immortal Infatuation, this is my territory, Stillwater Commandery. By doing this, your Youngflame clan is truly showing no regard for our Northmont clan.” A sonorous voice, backed by Celestial Immortal-level power, instantly shook every single inch of the surrounding area. The elderly staff-wielding hunch back and the black-robed, black-haired man had already begun moving towards them, side-by-side.

“Hmph.” The four Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan couldn’t even be bothered to talk to them; they each retreated at high speed, disappearing into the distant horizons.

They made quite a clean getaway.

“Ji Ning.” Celestial Immortal Hunchmont and Immortal Diancai flew over to him.

“Senior Hunchmont. Master.” Ning went over to welcome them.

“What happened? Four Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan joined forces to attack you?” Immortal Diancai was incomparably worried, while the nearby Celestial Immortal Hunchmont was secretly shocked as well. All four of the Celestial Immortals were exceedingly powerful; logically speaking, a slightly weaker Celestial Immortal should’ve been instantly killed! Ji Ning, however, had been able to hold on until their arrival.

“They have been looking to get rid of me for some time now. This time, they set up a trap here at my junior apprentice-brother Mu Northson’s place, waiting for me.” Ning’s heart was filled with guilt.

Junior apprentice-brother...

The thing most important to his junior apprentice-brother, the soul of his Dao-companion, had been destroyed. Ning didn’t know what his junior

apprentice-brother was currently thinking right now; his junior apprentice-brother had completely been collateral damage in this attempt to kill Ning.

“If I had known this would happen, when he refused, I would’ve forcibly abducted him to Swallow Mountain.” Ning was filled with endless regret. Because his junior apprentice-brother was filled with longing and love for this place, he was unwilling to listen to Ning’s suggestions, no matter what Ning said. In addition, since Ning felt that nobody would know that Northson had returned to this place, and given that Northson also had the Winged Immortal golem, he didn’t force his junior apprentice-brother to go back with him.

“My junior apprentice-brother literally just returned. How did the Youngflame clan find out?” Ning mused to himself.

“Ji Ning, you spoke of a junior apprentice-brother?” Immortal Diancai hurriedly asked.

“Yes. Mu Northson.” Ning nodded.

“You found him?” Immortal Diancai was shocked.

“I found him. Let’s go back first; let’s not stay here.” Ning glanced at the surrounding area; even the wooden house which his junior apprentice-brother had built had been utterly annihilated by this battle. That earlier battle had simply been too frenzied.

Ning, Immortal Diancai, and Celestial Immortal Hunchmont first returned to Stillwater City. After discussing a few affairs in detail, even Immortal Diancai agreed, “Based on what you said, Bloodcloud Hall’s attempted assassination of you was very likely done at the request of the Youngflame clan. Now that they have personally attempted to remove you...they probably won’t let matters rest like this.”

“Agreed. Ji Ning, given your current level of power, you aren’t able to withstand the Youngflame clan yet. You have to keep waiting and enduring it. After you become a Celestial Immortal, your chances will be much greater,” Celestial Immortal Hunchmont urged as well.

Ning was filled with regret and hate.

Wait and endure?

For how much longer was he supposed to wait and endure?

In the past, his mother had carried the burden of knowing who their mortal enemy was by herself; she had been unwilling to tell him that their enemy was the Youngflame clan, precisely because in her eyes, her son was more important than vengeance. In addition, she was afraid; the Youngflame clan was truly far too powerful. She didn't even dare imagine her son fighting against an ancient clan like this, one of the top ten clans of the entire world of the Grand Xia.

When the Youngflame clan had been frantically searching for him, and even trapping the Ji clan within Swallow Mountain, Ning had been forced to endure and bide his time!

When they had attempted to assassinate him within the imperial capital of the Grand Xia, Ning had still waited and endured!

He had never taken any reprisal actions against them.

In fact, even upon his return from Mount Innerheart, Ning had continued to wait and bide his time...because he didn't feel any confidence at all in his ability to deal with the Youngflame clan. The Northmont clan of Stillwater was already so incredibly powerful; what then of the Youngflame clan? The four Celestial Immortals that had appeared today were already incredibly terrifying...and this was probably not the full power the Youngflame clan could bring to bear.

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Swallow Mountain.

Only after returning to Swallow Mountain did Ning release his junior apprentice-brother.

"Youngflame clan...Youngflame clan...Youngflame clan..."

Within a house, a series of agonized, maddened growls could be heard. The nearby servants and maids who heard the voice felt their hearts

shudder. A grand formation had long ago been set up around this house, causing Northson to be completely unable to escape.

Ning stood there on the hallway, listening to the heart-rending growls.

He walked through the grand formation. He walked to the room. He pushed the door open. He entered.

Within the room.

Mu Northson was sitting on his knees like a madman, his hair tousled and even whiter than before. He raised his head to look towards Ning.

“Senior apprentice-brother.” Northson’s face was twisted with agony. His eyes were blood-red, and he said in hoarsely, “I will take revenge. I will take revenge! I will kill the Youngflame clan. Kill them. Kill them all. They took everything from me. I’m going to take everything from them. Annihilate them. Senior apprentice-brother, let me out!”

“This was all my fault.” Ning walked to his junior apprentice-brother’s side, then knelt down as well, taking his junior apprentice-brother’s hand into his own.

His junior apprentice-brother’s hand was trembling nonstop.

Ning was filled with tremendous guilt.

This was all purely because of the feud between him and the Youngflame clan. His junior apprentice-brother had ended up being dragged into it.

“It isn’t your fault, senior apprentice-brother. It was the Youngflame clan,” Northson said hoarsely. “I will take revenge. Kill them. The more I kill, the better. Senior apprentice-brother, why don’t you let me out? Why?”

“Wait. Wait a few more days,” Ning said in a low voice.

“I need to keep waiting?” Northson’s eyes were filled with madness.

“Junior apprentice-brother, do you think I don’t want to wipe out the Youngflame clan?” Ning’s entire body began to tremble slightly as well. “I’ve been biding my time for so many years. I want to take revenge very

badly...and not just for myself. This is for my mother...my uncle...my cousin...this is for all of them. I tell you this – Wait a few more days. Once my preparations are complete, I will definitely assault the Youngflame clan's headquarters."

"Wait how long?" Northson stared at Ning.

"Soon. Very soon," Ning said consolingly.

Suddenly, Ning rose to his feet. Turning his head, he stared towards the south. His gaze seemed to pass through the walls of space and penetrate to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia. In this moment, within the imperial palace of the imperial capital, the silver-haired Skyfox had just shattered the talisman which Ning had given him.

Northson, noticing that Ning had suddenly risen to his feet, couldn't help but turn his head to look at him.

"...Our chance just arrived," Ning said softly. "I'll go on a trip to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia first. After that...it will be time for the Youngflame clan to pay their blood debt to us."

Chapter 15: Exalted Immortal Blackheaven

"Pay their blood debt to us?" Mu Northson was startled, but then he frantically rose to his feet. "Senior apprentice-brother, this is my personal feud; even if I die, it doesn't matter. But you..."

"No need to say another word."

Ning shook his head, his gaze distant. "I've been wanting to fight with the Youngflame clan for quite some time now, but I've been biding my time and just enduring it for many years...it's time to resolve this matter."

"Senior apprentice-brother..." Northson was both frantic and worried. Although his heart was now filled with boundless hatred, he knew exactly how powerful the Youngflame clan was; from their battle against those four Celestial Immortals, Northson learned that there was still a significant difference in power between his senior apprentice-brother and the Youngflame clan. Thus, he didn't wish for Ning to put himself in mortal danger!

"Wait here for me." Turning his head, Ning strode out from the room.

Ning's figure quickly disappeared outside the formation. No matter how frantic Northson was, there was nothing he could do.

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"Uncle White." Ning walked to one of the beaches of Brightheart Island, where he saw a Whitewater Hound lying on the ground, staring at the lake.

"Ning, son." The Whitewater Hound rose to its feet. "The treasures have arrived?"

"Yes," Ning said softly. "It's time to go to the imperial capital of the Grand Xia."

A hint of a desire to kill appeared in the Whitewater Hound's eyes as well, a killing intent aimed towards the Youngflame clan. In his heart, he viewed Ji Ning as his nephew. He knew that the Youngflame clan had tried repeatedly to kill Ning...how could he not be angered by this?

“Let’s go.”

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Ning and the Whitewater Hound soared into the heavens. Moments later, they used a void blink to quickly depart from Swallow Mountain.

The imperial capital of the Grand Xia. Heavenly Treasures Mountain.

Ning and the Whitewater Hound descended straight downwards from the skies.

“Ji Ning!” A voice echoed in their eyes. Ning turned to look towards a particular residence within the main Heavenly Treasures Mountain, where he saw a silver-haired man. Ning and Uncle White immediately flew towards that residence.

“Senior Skyfox.” Ning walked over.

“Sit,” Skyfox said with a laugh.

Ning immediately sat down, while the Whitewater Hound lay down next to a flower basin within the courtyard.

“Ji Ning, you came quite fast,” Skyfox said with a laugh.

“The treasures are important,” Ning said.

Skyfox said with a loud laugh, “Don’t worry, all of the Five Elements treasures that you wanted have been assembled. Might I ask if you have prepared a high-grade Pure Yang treasure or an equivalent amount of other treasures?” As he spoke, Skyfox waved his hand. Instantly, a large number of enormous golden rocks appeared out of thin air, each of which was incomparably slick and glistening and radiated powerful auras of water. They were also slips of bamboo that were completely formed from jade, fist-sized drops of water, fiery flows of lava, and giant black chunks of a mysterious earthen material.

“Mmm.” Ning was instantly overjoyed upon seeing these things.

“The Xia Emperor truly is a trustworthy man.” Ning waved his hand. Instantly, Immortal swords radiating freezing auras or scorching auras suddenly appeared; these were the Sole-Ki Frost Swords and the Qiangang

Inferno Swords.

Skyfox's eyes lit up when he saw them.

"There are a total of forty-nine Sole-Ki Frost Swords and forty-nine Qiangang Inferno Swords," Ning said. "They should be comparable to one high-grade Pure Yang treasure, yes?"

"Yes." Skyfox laughed, then let out a sigh of praise. "Ji Ning, you truly do engage in business with style. These ninety-eight Immortal swords are indeed sufficient."

Based on how treasures were valued, a single top-grade Pure Yang treasure was comparable to a thousand top-grade Immortal-ranked treasures. This was a rough equivalency, not an absolute one! After all, there were differences amongst top-grade Pure Yang treasures as well.

As for high-grade Pure Yang treasures, they were generally comparable to one or two hundred top-grade Immortal-ranked treasures.

The forty-nine Sole-Ki Frost Swords and forty-nine Qiangang Inferno Swords which Ning had brought out were a set that came from the same source! They were thus more valuable than a miscellaneous collection of top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords, and so a total of ninety-eight of them was indeed enough.

As far as Ning was concerned, he had a thousand of these Immortal swords, while he could only use 729 of them at most. The other two hundred-plus were extras.

"Go ahead and inspect them." Ning waved his hand, and the flying swords all moved towards Skyfox.

Skyfox immediately used his Celestial Immortal power to investigate them. "Yes, they are all excellent top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords. Ji Ning, these Five Elements treasures are yours." The many Five Elements treasures in midair all flew towards Ning, and Ning accepted with a wave of his hand.

Their trade had been completed!

"Ji Ning, if there is anything else you need, feel free to come find me." Skyfox was in an extremely good mood. It must be understood that the Grand Xia's control over this world wasn't very stable right now, while those Five Elements treasures would need time to be refined into magic treasures; it was a fine trade for him to immediately acquire such excellent magic treasures for them.

"In the next two days, I think I will make some more requests of you, senior Skyfox," Ning said. "However...this isn't the time just yet."

Skyfox was intrigued. He nodded lightly.

He then departed from the residence, but also instructed his attendant to wait here and obey Ning's orders.

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The black-robed Ning and a white-robed, white-haired man were seated facing each other.

"Let's drink some wine," the black-robed Ning said with a smile.

"Alright." Uncle White was puzzled. Why had Ning suddenly released his Primaltwin? What was his true body doing?

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The distant western seas, atop the secret island where the Seamless Gate's forces had been stationed.

"How useless." Violetgrass was seated atop her royal throne, a hint of anger gathering in her brows. "The exalted Youngflame clan was unable to kill a puny Ji Ning, even when he was completely unprepared. They truly have disappointed me. It seems our Seamless Gate will have to handle this ourselves."

"Milord, let us attack Ji Ning; he'll definitely perish."

"At most, we'll have to spend a bit of effort on it."

"Milord, no need to be angry."

The golden-robed Celestial Immortals before the throne were all eating,

drinking, and laughing.

The maiden frowned. "It will indeed require a bit of effort. We'll have to ask that old bastard to help out."

Ji Ning had the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] protecting his body; her subordinates alone might be able to kill him, but it would still involve an element of risk! For example, the four mighty Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan hadn't been able to kill him within an extremely short amount of time, resulting in his helpers arriving to rescue him! By this same principle...although her subordinate Celestial Immortals were definitely strong enough to completely dominate Ji Ning, they wouldn't be able to break through the protection of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]."

"Exalted Immortal Blackheaven is arriving." Suddenly, a figure appeared within the palace; it was a black-robed servant, who hurriedly said with respect, "Exalted Immortal Blackheaven has already left the Mount Stele major world and has gone to the Fifth World. He'll arrive shortly."

"That old bastard is arriving?" The maiden frowned.

All of the ten-plus golden-robed Celestial Immortals below her, however, all hurriedly rose to their feet. Celestial Immortal Blackheaven's fame was widespread; although they were all Celestial Immortals, in the face of Celestial Immortal Blackheaven, they still felt a hint of nervousness.

This was because...

Celestial Immortal Blackheaven was an old freak that had power that was almost comparable to that of a Pure Yang True Immortal! He was one of the absolute most supreme of Celestial Immortals.

"Ahahaha, little baby girl Violetgrass." After a spatial ripple, a loud laugh could be heard that echoed throughout the palace.

"Old bastard." The maiden pursed her lips.

A figure walked into the palace. He looked like a middle-aged man with long, unbound hair. He walked in barefoot, looking rather unkept and dissolute.

“Exalted Immortal Blackheaven.”

“Lord Blackheaven.”

“Milord.”

The other golden-robed Celestial Immortals all hurriedly called out to him.

Exalted Immortal Blackheaven was someone which even the Gatemaster of the Seamless Gate had to give some face to. He was quite famous within the Three Realms. In terms of raw power in a frontal assault, he wasn’t that formidable; at most, he was on the level of Celestial Immortal Infatuation. But he simply was a master of far too many strange, unorthodox techniques.

Fleeing techniques? Trapping techniques? Poison techniques? He had far too many techniques at his disposal; even True Immortals or Empyrean Gods would be miserable facing him! He was considered something of a legend in the Three Realms.

“Little baby girl Violetgrass, I didn’t expect that you would end up begging for my help.” Exalted Immortal Blackheaven said smugly, “Ahaha, when I first saw you, you were a little baby girl...and now, you have made something of yourself.”

“You owe me, you old bastard.” The maiden frowned.

“Haha, yes...in the past, I did indeed promise to fulfill three requests of yours. You’ve used up one of them; this will be the second one.” Celestial Immortal Blackheaven laughed. “Speak! What do you want me to do?”

The maiden waved her hand, and a book appeared within it. She tossed it straight to the distant Celestial Immortal Blackheaven, who accepted it, read it, then frowned. “Ji Ning?”

“Within this book are all the intelligence reports we have gathered regarding this Ji Ning. Without question, he is not on our side; if he’s given time to grow and develop, he’ll probably end up being trouble for us. Thus, it’s best to get rid of him early on. The Gatemaster has instructed me to handle it, but I want to ensure that things will go exactly

as planned, which is why I've asked you to help," the maiden said.

"The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]?" After reading through the intelligence reports, Celestial Immortal Blackheaven's eyes bulged out a bit. He then raised his head and said unhappily, "Little baby girl Violetgrass, this is a practitioner of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]; the only powers in the Three Realms who can teach and transmit the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] are those Daofathers. Those who have this art can be counted on two hands, and each of them are utterly terrifying. This Ji Ning's master is most likely one of them, and could crush me with a single finger."

"What are you afraid of? You think his master would dare intervene?" Violetgrass was disdainful.

"Maybe..." Celestial Immortal Blackheaven shook his head. "Too dangerous. This is too dangerous."

"You old bastard!" The maiden said angrily. She knew this Celestial Immortal Blackheaven quite well; after all, she had followed the Gatemaster and Celestial Immortal Blackheaven when she was very young. Celestial Immortal Blackheaven was legendary for his cowardice and caution, as well as being skilled in unorthodox abilities.

"Fine." Celestial Immortal Blackheaven said resignedly, "Perhaps the chances of his master intervening are indeed remote...since it is for you, I'll let one of my clones go deal with Ji Ning."

"A clone?" The maiden stared.

"Don't worry. I'll let my clone carry my 'Polaris Godlocking Circlet'; once it emerges, he will definitely be locked in place by it, without any chance to resist." Celestial Immortal Blackheaven chortled, "In the blink of an eye, I'll have captured him. I'll take him away and let you decide how to handle him."

The maiden said, puzzled, "Polaris Godlocking Circlet'? What type of a treasure is that? Why haven't I heard of it?"

"I have rarely fought others, from the Primordial Era to the present era. How much do you think you know? If it wasn't for the fact that the Three

Realms are about to be swept into a storm, I wouldn't be willing to use any of these treasures of mine." Celestial Immortal Blackheavens said loudly, "Alright, tell me...where is this Ji Ning? Tell me, and I'll go collect him."

The maiden, upon hearing this, laughed. "Our most recent intelligence places him at the imperial capital of the Grand Xia."

"The imperial capital of the Grand Xia?" Celestial Immortal Blackheaven frowned. "That's not a place I can go to. The Xia Emperor isn't easy to deal with. After he leaves the imperial capital, I'll make my move."

Chapter 16: The Fourth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand]

"Fine. As soon as Ji Ning leaves the imperial capital of the Grand Xia, I will immediately notify you." The maiden nodded.

Celestial Immortal Blackheavens chortled merrily and nodded. "Then before I deal with Ji Ning...come! Let's have a nice chat and catch up with each other."

The imperial capital of the Grand Xia.

The black-robed Ning was seated face to face with Uncle White, while his true body had entered the underwater estate.

The underwater estate. Within the Still Room.

Ning's true body was seated atop the bed of netherwater jade. Surrounding him were a large amount of Five Elements treasures, ranging from a thousand kilograms to tens of thousands of kilograms in weight. All of them were circling around Ning.

Time flowed on.

Some of the ripples coming from the Five Elements treasures were growing progressively weaker as they quickly began to transform from spirit-items to useless items. One could watch as the pieces of gold-gems from the Deva Realm began to visibly decay, becoming worthless rocks that were a dull white color. The flows of liquid lava, formingly agile and graceful, swirled in the air, but were quickly being transformed into acidic water.

Ning's twin hands were glowing with five colors of light. They were skyrocketing in power as they ravenously consumed the Five Elements essence from those spirit-treasures.

This continued for twelve full hours.

The surrounding area was now littered with floating bits of shatter rocks, rock-like strips of bamboo, ordinary and rather disgusting acidic

water, as well as a large amount of random dirt.

"Whew." Ning exhaled, lowering his head to look at his two hands. His hands were glowing with a dull light, and the power within them was truly shocking.

"Success."

"The Fourth Cycle of my [Starseizing Hand]!"

Ning's eyes were blazing. However...he could sense that his current hands had reached an absolute limit in power. There would be no way for him to strengthen them any further for now. If he wanted to...he would have to get his hands to qualitatively evolve and transform to a completely new stage, one which required him to first break through to the Empyrean God level.

"The Fourth Cycle of the Starseizer. My twin hands are now comparable to supreme Pure Yang treasures. When using [Three Heads, Six Arms], I'll have the equivalent of six supreme Pure Yang treasures at my disposal..." Ning could sense how powerful his palms had become.

This feeling of tremendous power really was wonderful.

Magic treasures were extremely important to an Immortal cultivator. Why was it that at the early Wanxiang stage, one would be able to completely dominate a peak Zifu Disciple? The Primal level, the Void level, the Celestial Immortal level...advancing through the major stages caused an enormous increase in power, partially because one's own elemental ki would change, but also because one's magic treasures would dramatically improve! Even if one's insights into the Dao were comparable to one's foes, there would still be a huge difference in power.

Wanxiang Adepts were able to use Earth-ranked treasures, Primal Daoists were able to use Heaven-ranked magic treasures, Void-level Earth Immortals were able to use Immortal-ranked magic treasures, and Celestial Immortals were able to use Pure Yang treasures.

Magic treasures advanced in power to a truly staggering degree.

For example, Ji Ning! In terms of insights into the Dao, he was actually

comparable to Patriarch Goldclock. And thanks to his [Starseizing Hand] divine ability, Ning's foundation was actually superior to Patriarch Goldclock's.

Why, then, had he been beaten silly by Patriarch Goldclock, without having any chance to fight back at all?

Why was it that he was clearly weaker than Patriarch Goldclock?

Precisely because Patriarch Goldclock had a top-grade Pure Yang divine greatclock!

For another example, Patriarch Deadwood and Patriarch Goldclock. In terms of insights into the Dao, Patriarch Deadwood was considerably superior to Patriarch Goldclock, but Patriarch Goldclock's power was comparable to Patriarch Deadwood's. This was because his magic treasure made up for their disparity in power.

"In the Three Realms, there are some experts who primarily rely on their magic treasures to roam the realms." Ning had read up on many commonly known facts while at Mount Innerheart, and had learned that some Celestial Immortals relied on extremely powerful Protocosmic spirit-treasures to roam the Three Realms. By relying on some especially unique ones, they might even be able to fight against True Immortals or Empyrean Gods!

"My two palms have just skyrocketed in power, from being just barely at the Pure Yang level to the very pinnacle of the Pure Yang level! They are comparable to supreme middle-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures. My close combat power has most likely increased by an enormous amount as well."

Ning knew very well that with his [Starseizing Hand] having advanced from the Third Cycle to the Fourth Cycle, the amount of physical strength he would be able to instantly unleash had just risen dramatically.

In addition...his palms were now comparable to supreme Pure Yang treasures (supreme middle-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasures); they were now on par with the Rahu Bow.

With these two factors combined...Ning's power had just skyrocketed up several levels! Patriarch Goldclock? Ning now held him in no regard at all.

"I am stronger than Patriarch Goldclock in every conceivable way now." Ning walked down from the netherwater jade bed, allowing all of the rubbish hovering within the room to be reduced to dust by his sword-light.

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Ning's true body emerged from the Still Room and went to the main hall of the underwater estate.

"Ji Ning." The giant yellow bear had a smile on his face. "Mm...you've mastered the Fourth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand]. You can now be considered a decently strong figure of the Three Realms."

Ning nodded.

Although the [Starseizing Hand] 'merely' had a total of six cycles, he had to reach the True God level before he could train in the Sixth Cycle, while the Fifth Cycle required that he become an Empyrean God. To become a True God was simply far, far too difficult. True Gods were comparable to Daofathers in power, and so for the foreseeable future, Ning would probably only have a chance at mastering the Fifth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand].

The Fifth Cycle would render Ning's palms as powerful as a supreme Protocosmic spirit-treasure. In the Three Realms, this was enough to render many True Immortals and Empyrean Gods jealous of him.

In truth, the Fourth Cycle alone was enough to make Ning's palms truly precious 'items'. If someone were to kill Ning and hack off his palms, they would probably be used as magic treasures!

"All my power is thanks to the fact that Master Threelives was able to develop such an incredible divine ability," Ning said.

"Since Master left his legacy behind, you are the first person to reach such a level of power. Don't underestimate yourself." The giant yellow power laughed. "Alright...your power has now increased dramatically.

The ninth level of the Wargod Hall...you now have a 99% chance of overcoming it. Wish to give it a try?"

Ning was instantly delighted.

The giant yellow bear was modest of speech, and would generally give very conservative estimates; for even him to use the term '99%' meant that Ning's success was virtually assured.

"I'm now comparable to a supreme Celestial Immortal?" Ning said in surprise and delight.

"Void-level Fiendgods can be comparable to Celestial Immortals. Since your [Starseizing Hand] has reached the Fourth Cycle, you can now compare to the most supreme of Void-level Fiendgods." The giant yellow bear laughed, "This naturally means that you are now comparable to the most supreme of Celestial Immortals. Will you challenge the Wargod Hall or not?"

"Yes, of course." Ning nodded.

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The ninth level of the Wargod Hall.

This was a completely empty void. Ning suddenly appeared out of nowhere within it.

"This is...?" Ning glanced around himself.

Whoosh. From far away, a drop of golden blood suddenly manifested. This drop of golden blood quickly transformed into a Fiendgod that was wearing a set of golden armor. He was tall and muscular, with blood-red hair and a long black spear in his hands. His eyes were filled with an unearthly killing intent, one strong enough to cause Ning to feel startled.

Ning stared in amazement at the figure that had just appeared.

"So you are Ji Ning?" The red-haired Fiendgod actually revealed a smile, a very gentle and kindly smile, the smile a father would have when looking at his child.

"You are...?" Ning was rather flabbergasted.

Although he had always felt that the Wargod Hall was quite peculiar, and had discovered more and more oddities as he had progressed through its ranks, he had never come to truly understand the secrets behind it. This opponent which he was now encountering here on the ninth level... he was far more powerful than any of the previous figures Ning had encountered. That aura alone...Ning could sense that this person might even be comparable to his senior apprentice-brother Silvermoon.

"My name is Redsnow," the red-haired Fiendgod said with a smile.

"You are an Empyrean God?" Ning asked.

The red-haired Fiendgod laughed. "Good eye. I am indeed an Empyrean God, but this is just an extremely weak clone of mine, created through a single drop of blood."

Ning understood the profound mysteries behind the art of clones.

The more divine power one put into a clone, the more power the clone would have. For example, a clone that was created from a single hair would naturally be extremely weak. To a Fiendgod, blood was still quite important. A clone created from the blood of an Empyrean God would most likely be at the Celestial Immortal level. As to how powerful it was, exactly? Hard to say.

"Senior Redsnow, how do you know that I am Ji Ning?" Ning asked. He found this quite peculiar.

"It was the big bear who told me," the red-haired Fiendgod laughed. "The Godking finally has a successor. All of us have waited far, far too long."

Ning's heart shook.

Waited far too long?

"Come, Ji Ning. The Godking chose you as his successor. Let me see exactly how strong you are...and if you are qualified to have your position." The longspear in the red-haired Fiendgod's hand trembled.

Chapter 17: The Rahu Bow At Full Power

The red-haired Fiendgod's power caused Ji Ning to feel shock. He was far too powerful! That longspear...it moved like a ghost or an illusion. No matter how he used his hands to attack, be it with sword-fingers or various sword-arts, the longspear was able to easily break through his techniques. While breaking through, the longspear would also strike out in pierces, thrusts, or sideways swipes!

In short...Ning was at a complete disadvantage!

The longspear moved like a dragon, danced like a spirit through water. It carried inconceivably profound mysteries with it, causing Ning to feel like nothing more than a punching bag.

"No more, no more!" The red-haired Fiendgod finally came to a halt. Shaking his head, he sighed. "I lost."

"Senior Redsnow, you clearly are far more powerful than..." Halfway through his sentence, Ning suddenly understood.

It was most likely that his opponent's divine power was almost exhausted!

"Each time your palm clashed against my longspear, the force of the collision consumed a large amount of my divine power." The red-haired Fiendgod looked at Ning, then said with a sigh, "The [Starseizing Hand] divine ability truly is formidable. This clone of mine has far too little divine power...after clashing against your [Starseizing Hand] ten-plus times, the divine power has almost been used up."

"If your true body was here, senior, you'd probably wipe me out in one blow," Ning said. Although his body was extremely powerful, the red-haired Fiendgod's spear-assaults were even more savage than the strikes of Celestial Immortal Infatuation of the Youngflame clan. Each time Ning's hands clashed against the tip of the spear, he felt as though his hands were about to be pierced through. In truth...his skin was already covered with countless white spots! If the red-haired Fiendgod's true body was present, he probably would've been able to completely destroy Ning's

physical body! Fortunately, Ning had just trained in the Fourth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand]; if it had been pre-breakthrough, he probably would've been too weak and the red-haired Fiendgod's divine power would have lasted longer than Ning's divine power, which would've been used up first.

Once his divine power was used up and he was unable to use his divine ability, Ning would end up losing!

"Losing is losing." The red-haired Fiendgod smiled merrily as he looked at Ning. "I hear that you've trained for less than a century?"

"Yes." Ning nodded.

In his heart, he was murmuring to himself. Why did the giant yellow bear tell this Empyrean God everything?

"Less than a century...your sword-arts are quite excellent," the red-haired Fiendgod said in praise.

"Facing you, all I could do was rely on [Three Heads, Six Arms] to increase the size of my palms and use them to block your longspear like miniature bucklers." Ning shook his head, quite ashamed. He had been forced to use his hands like bucklers, and yet they had been broken past repeatedly; the difference in power was simply too great.

"Haha. Even as far back as the Primordial Era, I had already mastered multiple Grand Daos, to say nothing of my current level. If your sword-arts weren't so powerful, you probably wouldn't have been able to deplete my divine power." The red-haired Fiendgod let out a sigh. "Your sword-arts are quite well-suited for defense."

Ning laughed. Of course! He had the most insights in the element of Water; ever since he was young, his sword-arts had focused on defense.

"Train hard and become an Empyrean God soon!" The red-haired Fiendgod laughed. "Otherwise...you won't be able to get those fellows to be loyal and submit to you." After saying these words, he completely disappeared, melting away into the void.

"Be loyal and submit?" Ning murmured these words to himself.

Ning left, returning to the main hall of the underwater estate.

“Congratulations on overcoming the ninth floor,” the giant yellow bear said, a merry smile on his face.

But Ning had a frown on his own face. “Empyrean God Redsnow. Who is he?”

The giant yellow bear was momentarily startled. He then said calmly, “He was an Empyrean God under Master’s command...but that’s nothing you need to ask about for now. You are still far too weak; even here, in the world of the Grand Xia, just a single one of the three thousand major worlds, you still have to tread carefully. You aren’t qualified to get involved with the major powers that exist within the Three Realms.”

“All I can tell you is this...the Three Realms aren’t as simple as you might believe them to be. Not even Patriarch Subhuti will tell you everything before you become truly powerful. For the weak, the less you know, the better. Too much knowledge will be the death of you. The abilities of the truly major powers of the Three Realms are beyond what you can imagine. Even Master...in the face of the storm that swept the Three Realms long ago, he was nothing special. Even Patriarch Subhuti, who was even more powerful than Master, was afraid to take part in that war. So...how much of a chance do you think you have?”

Ning said softly, “The destruction of Pangu’s Primordial World...a major secret is concealed within it? Can it be that everything I learned was wrong?”

“What you and your friends know is merely what the Daofathers wish for you to know. Do not ask anything else; only after you become a True Immortal or an Empyrean God are you qualified to know. As for Celestial Immortals...major powers can kill countless Celestial Immortals with a wave of the hand,” the giant yellow bear said.

“Do you wish to go to the Treasure Hall to choose a treasure? You aren’t an Empyrean God yet; there’s actually no point for you to choose a Pure Yang treasure, you know.”

“I will. Of course I will!” Ning said hurriedly.

“Rahu Bow.”

Ning sent out a spiritual call.

Whoosh.

A black-robed youth instantly appeared next to him.

“I’m about to procure a bowstring for you. Choose what type of bowstring you would like,” Ning said.

“Ahahaha...you are finally going to get a new bowstring for me?” The black-robed youth was instantly delighted. He then turned his head to look towards the giant yellow bear. “Big bear, where’s that scroll I wrote out earlier?”

“Here.” The giant yellow bear waved his hand, and a scroll appeared out of nowhere, hovering in the air.

“Master, this scroll includes the three types of bowstrings that are the best suited for me. Of course...they aren’t cheap. The three of them are of three different levels; naturally, the higher the level, the better,” the black-robed youth said excitedly. “Godbows...the body of the bow and the string of the bow are two separate parts. For a Protocosmic spirit-treasure like myself, a powerful body is the most important part, while bowstrings are easier to create and procure. The most important quality is their tensile strength and ability to store power, allowing the maximum amount of power from the formations engraved into the body of the bow to flow through them.”

Ning accepted the scroll. Opening it, he said in surprise, “All are fire-attribute bowstrings? But your body is water-attribute, right?”

“Fire and water, body and bowstring; that’s what is necessary for the power to be tremendous. Can it be that you have forgotten that when you discovered me within the Crescent world, I used the power of heaven and earth to form arrows of flame? In addition, the two arrows that you discovered; weren’t they also fire-attribute?” The black-robed youth said.

“Understood.” Ning laughed, then nodded. “Don’t worry; I’ll definitely procure a superb bowstring for you.”

The main headquarters of the Heavenly Treasures Mountain. High noon.

“Uncle White, have you prepared the list?” Ning looked towards the white-robed, white-haired man before him.

“I prepared it long ago. Since we are going to act against the Youngflame clan, we naturally need to spare no expense.” Uncle White handed Ning a leather scroll.

Ning lowered his head to read through it, nodding slightly.

To deal with the Youngflame clan...

Ning already had a plan for doing this. But of course, plans rarely survived contact with the enemy. Since he wasn’t sure about the trump cards which the Youngflame clan had in their possession, Ning naturally had to make multiple levels of preparations.

“Ji Ning.” A voice rang out.

A silver-haired man, Skyfox, came walking in. Smiling, he said, “Do you have some more good news for me?”

“I do indeed,” Ning said with a laugh. “Let me show you a few things.”

Whoosh.

Ten globes suddenly appeared in the air around Ning. One of the globes was a watery green, while the other nine globes were a fiery red. Every single globe was emanating incomparably terrifying ripples of power.

“These are...” Skyfox’s eyes turned round and huge. “Can these all be...”

“Sole-Ki Nine Element Pearls!” Ning nodded as he spoke.

Skyfox cleared his throat, glancing towards Ning in disbelief. These Sole-Ki Nine Element Pearls...they were a set of Pure Yang treasures that were quite famous, even back in Pangu’s Primordial World. They could transform into nine entire worlds! When a pearl smashed into a foe, it was as though an entire world was smashing into that person. But of course, that was when these Pure Yang treasures were used to their maximum potential.

"I need a set of top-grade Immortal-ranked Fuxi Staff Formation staffs."

"I need twenty top-grade Pure Yang spirit-pills, or an equivalent amount of low-grade Pure Yang spirit-pills."

"This list has a bowstring on it, as well as some cheaper alternatives."

"I also need the objects written on this leather scroll."

Ning handed over two different leather scrolls.

Ning was unable to use Pure Yang treasures for now. By the time he was able to use them, his power would probably be far greater than his current level of power, and in addition, his palms were already comparable to supreme Pure Yang treasures. Thus...he naturally chose to sell off this treasure, so as to increase his power right away!

"Ji Ning, you really are..." Upon seeing the leather scrolls, Skyfox's face turned ashen. "Your requests are too excessive."

"If the Xia Emperor isn't willing, I won't force this trade," Ning said. "I can go seek out my fellow senior disciples."

Chapter 18: Leaving the Heavenly Treasures Mountain

The set of Pure Yang treasures which Ji Ning had just taken out, the Sole-Ki Nine Element Pearls, had been chosen by him from the Treasure Hall. They were the most valuable items which Ning could choose from the Pure Yang treasures available to him. None of the formidable Pure Yang treasures which Daoist Threelives had left behind in his Treasure Hall were weak; even the cheapest was at least as valuable as a high-grade Pure Yang treasure.

However...there were too few Pure Yang treasures, after all. Even Daoist Threelives wasn't able to collect too many of them. After overcoming the ninth level of the Wargod Hall, Ning had only been given a total of eighteen Pure Yang treasures to choose from.

And so...

He had chosen the most valuable item, the Sole-Ki Nine Element Pearls. Nine of these pearls were high-grade Pure Yang treasures, while the nuclear pearl that served as the core of the formation was a top-grade Pure Yang treasure! In addition, this was a treasure-set that belonged to the exceedingly expensive 'world-type' of magic treasures. One could smash them into foes with the force of a minor world, but could also use their power to suppress and bind a foe, causing them to feel as though they were mired in quickstand. They were far more powerful than the Primordial Nightriver contained within the Thousandbull Sword. This sort of world-type Pure Yang treasure was exceedingly rare and precious to begin with; this set alone was most likely comparable to four or five ordinary top-grade Pure Yang treasures!

"The Fuxi Staff Formation, the items on the first list, and the arrows are minor matters," Skyfox said helplessly. "Master can also provide you with the twenty top-grade Pure Yang spirit-pills that you have requested. But the bow...your request is too extravagant. Such bowstrings are not so easily procured."

"The treasures and Pure Yang spirit-pills that I have requested can most likely be procured by any True Immortal or Empyrean God who asks his friends for them. The most important item on the list is that bowstring. If it wasn't for that bowstring, I wouldn't even be willing to give up this set of Pure Yang treasures in exchange," Ning said. "The Xia Emperor is of the imperial clan of the Primordial Era; ordinary True Immortals and Empyrean Gods might not be able to produce such a bowstring, but I trust the Xia Emperor is."

After having stayed at Mount Innerheart for some time, Ning knew exactly how powerful the imperial clan of the Primordial Era was.

Pangu's Primordial World...

Back then, there was no such thing as the three thousand major worlds or trillion minor worlds! There was just a single world; Pangu's Primordial World! And back then, the imperial clan of the Primordial Era ruled over the entirety of the human race! They had quite a few major powers who were at the Daofather level. Although Pangu's Primordial World ended up shattering, and although the imperial clan of the Primordial Era was no longer as mighty as it once was, and although the Xia Emperor and the Xiamang clan were merely of a branch of that lineage...the Xia Emperor's roots were far beyond the likes of an ordinary True Immortal or Empyrean God.

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Within a dark void.

The black-robed Xia Emperor was seated in the lotus position. He opened his eyes. "Sole-Ki Nine Element Pearls? They actually ended up in Ji Ning's hands! A young fellow like him, who hasn't even overcome his Celestial Tribulation; how is it that he is able to produce such a set of Pure Yang treasures? And such precious ones at that! Strange, truly strange..."

Strange things like this could be explained with a single, simple word. That word was...luck!

Only an extremely lucky person could have such results!

"The storm is about to descend. Pure Yang treasures like these Sole-Ki Nine Element Pearls...they will be greatly desired by many True Immortals and Empyrean Gods." The black-robed Xia Emperor pondered privately for a time. "A bow...it seems I'll have to go see Uncle."

The Xia Emperor had long ago left the imperial clan of the Primordial Era to set off on his own, establishing his own Xiamang lineage. Thus, he would rarely see the other members of the Primordial imperial clan.

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"Master has sent word." Skyfox looked towards Ning, who immediately listened carefully.

"He has agreed to all your other requests, save for that bowstring; that will take some time," Skyfox explained. "Master is currently thinking of a way to try and procure one. You should know that the bowstring you have requested is one of the most supreme bowstrings of the Three Realms."

Ning nodded lightly. "I'm not in a rush."

In an ordinary situation, it was hard to say whether he would be able to trade his Sole-Ki Nine Element Pearls for the treasures he had requested. However, since a storm was about to descend, and the pearls were items that could be used right away, whereas a bowstring...a bowstring had to be matched with a similarly superb bow! As for the truly supreme master archers of the Three Realms, they each already had their own favored bows. Thus, Ning felt comfortable that at a time like this, the Xia Emperor would be willing to help with this exchange.

"As a member of the Primordial imperial clan and as a disciple of Daofather Crimsonbright, and as a supposed life-long friend of Daofather Raindragon...although a bowstring like this is hard to find, the Xia Emperor should be able to succeed." Ning chose to wait.

Skyfox elected to temporarily withdraw.

Time flowed on.

Four entire hours passed. It was now nightfall. Skyfox once more appeared before him.

"From the look on your face, senior Skyfox, I can guess...that the bowstring has been found," Ning said with a laugh.

"Master spent up quite a bit of energy, but he finally managed to find a bowstring for you." Skyfox smiled as he handed Ning a golden gourd. "All the items you desire are within this gourd. Take a close look." They were within the imperial capital of the Grand Xia; he wasn't worried that Ning would take the treasures and instantly flee.

Forget about Ji Ning; even the True Immortals and Empyrean Gods of the Seamless Gate and the Myriad Demons Cave wouldn't dare to challenge the Xia Emperor within the imperial capital of the Grand Xia!

"Such generosity! This gourd is a top-grade Immortal-ranked magic treasure that holds a small dimension within it," Ning said with a laugh.

"A gift," Skyfox said in a very casual manner.

Ning held that golden gourd in his hands, carefully inspecting its contents. Within the golden gourd hovered spirit-pills with powerful auras, each of which contained an astonishing amount of extremely pure elemental ki. They were all Pure Yang-level spirit-pills. There were also a large number of precious objects floating within the gourd, the ones which Uncle White needed to set up his formations. There was also a set of Fuxi Staff Formation staffs which Uncle White needed! The more powerful a set of Fuxi Staff Formation staffs, the greater the power of the formations.

"Bowstring...arrows..." Ning was absolutely satisfied with what he saw.

A pitch-black bowstring hung in the air within the golden globe, and next to it were a total of a hundred fiery arrows. Naturally, these arrows were merely high-grade Immortal-ranked treasures.

Within the underwater estate.

"Ahaha, a bowstring comes!" The nearby black-robed youth was extremely excited. "Master, you truly are amazing. You aren't even a Celestial Immortal, but were able to procure such a fine bowstring. Although it's simply a bowstring...it's even more precious than an

ordinary top-grade Pure Yang spirit-treasure."

Ning smiled, personally affixing the bowstring onto the body of the bow.

After connecting the two together...

Rumble...

The black greatblow instantly flew up to hover in the air. Light cascaded off of its body like a series of waves of black water. The body of the bow was clearly glowing with a black, watery light, but when the light reached the bowstring, it transformed into a fiery light.

"Ahahaha...with this bowstring, I'm now as strong as I was back during the Primordial Era." The black-robed youth was absolutely excited.

Ning smiled and nodded.

The Rahu Bow was a high-grade Protocosmic spirit-treasure; logically speaking, such a treasure couldn't possibly be damaged under normal situations! However, its bowstring had ended up snapping; this was because the body of the bow and the bowstring...actually had been qualitatively different in power. The bowstring was comparatively more fragile; in fact, there were some True Gods who could break apart the bowstring of a godbow! If they suddenly released their strength and pulled the bowstring with full power, the bowstring might just snap! After doing that, they would replace the snapped bowstring with an even better one! This was why, even when its bowstring was destroyed, the Rahu Bow had been able to use the power of heaven and earth to attack Ning.

"I now have my godbow and my arrows, while my [Starseizing Hand] has reached the Fourth Cycle. Although I only have a basic level of skill in [Houyi's Archery], it's enough to unleash tremendous power." Ning was filled with eagerness.

He was only at a basic level of skill in archery...but that was in comparison to the full [Houyi's Archery]. Compared to others in the Three Realms, Ning could already be considered an expert archer; after all, he was even able to use heartforce.

Heartforce was mysterious and unfathomable!

Unlike other types of force, it was extremely difficult to sense and touch...but it truly was extraordinarily powerful. The ability to use heartforce was a dividing factor between those who were and were not able to successfully become divine archers of the Three Realms. Ning had clearly already passed through that doorway, and he had also learned some of the knacks of using divine power from [Houyi's Archery].

Now, it was matched with a high-grade Protocosmic godbow...and his own strength with the [Starseizing Hand]!

"After I reach a more profound level in [Houyi's Archery], I'll be able to easily kill any foe within a million kilometers." Ning was filled with eagerness.

.....

And so, Ning once more entered the underwater estate, preparing to train in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]. Previously, when fighting against the Fiendgod Redsnow, Ning had understood that although his body was seemingly impregnable, if he were to run into a True Immortal or Empyrean God, he would probably be destroyed with utter ease. Thus, he had to increase his power as soon as possible. After all, a storm was coming to shake the Three Realms; it was always a good idea to increase his strength when possible.

Since he was about to truly go all-out against the Youngflame clan... how could he not move to improve his odds of survival?

"Glug." Ning began to swallow down one-spirit pill after another, as quickly as if he were eating peanuts. He began to dissolve them within his body.

To train in the Third Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], Ning had needed to use a total of a hundred top-grade Immortal-ranked spirit-pills.

To train in the Sixth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], the cost would be a thousand times as great; a total of a hundred thousand top-grade Immortal-ranked spirit-pills would be needed! This was roughly

comparable to a hundred top-grade Pure Yang spirit-pills! If he had to use treasures to trade for them, a single set of Sole-Ki Nine Element Pearls would be insufficient; this time, Ning had merely acquired the equivalent of twenty top-grade Pure Yang spirit-pills.

Rumble...

Ning's body began to rumble without pause. His bones felt as though mountains were smashing into them, and his flesh felt like they were being ground away by two colliding continents. His divine body was being repeatedly enhanced, and it was growing increasingly powerful.

The Fourth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] – Success!

The Fifth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] – Success!

“Whew.” Ning finally came to a halt.

“After using up half the spirit-pills, I’ve finally mastered the Fifth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]. The remaining spirit-pills...I should keep them. In a life-and-death battle, elemental ki is used up far too fast; these spirit-pills can be used to replenish my energy. Mmm...my divine body is now comparable to a high-grade Immortal-ranked treasure.” Ning felt as though his kicks and punches now contained incomparably terrifying might.

His divine body was truly like a magic treasure! His speed had also been increased to a truly swift new level.

.....

Ning departed from the Heavenly Treasures Mountain. Although he had only stayed there for a total of two days, his power had skyrocketed in an astonishing manner! He had reached the Fourth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand] and the Fifth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], as well as fixed his Rahu Bow...and even Uncle White, a master of formations, had increased in power dramatically.

“King Yan’s Estate.”

Ning reached the outside of King Yan’s Estate. This time, he was

planning to deal with the Youngflame clan; how could he forget the person who hated the Youngflame clan the most, the one who was willing to sacrifice everything to destroy them...his cousin, Yuchi Xiyue?

He didn't need to make any requests; he went straight into the King's estate, and he quickly found Yuchi Xiyue's.

"Cousin." Ning and Xiyue were meeting privately within a veranda. With but a thought, Ning completely blocked off the surrounding space.

"What is it?" Xiyue, seeing how Ning was acting, couldn't help but ask this question.

"It is time for the Youngflame clan to pay their debt of blood," Ning said softly.

Xiyue was completely shocked. She instantly jumped to her feet.

Chapter 19: The Sword Pointed at Easthill Commandery

Of course Yuchi Xiyue wanted revenge; for the sake of revenge, she would be able to sacrifice everything, even her life! This was because her father, Yuchi Mount, had always dreamed of revenge. She was going to fulfill her father's dream. For the sake of the Yuchi clan...she would ensure that their blood debt would be repaid!

But she also knew exactly how powerful the Youngflame clan was. Ji Ning had, after all, trained for less than a century; how could he be a match for the Youngflame clan?

"Little brother, don't go too crazy," Xiyue said worriedly.

"Cousin, don't worry; I already have a plan," Ning said confidently. "Although I'm not confident in being able to kill the Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan...I'll teach them a lesson they'll never forget."

Yuchi Xiyue was still very worried. "Are you truly confident?"

"Of course." Ning nodded.

He already had the power of a supreme Celestial Immortal; he no longer held Patriarch Goldclock and Patriarch Deadwood in any regard. Only Patriarch Infatuation still posed a bit of a threat to him, but despite that, he was now capable of simply standing there and letting Patriarch Infatuation attack as he pleased; his body, now protected by the Fifth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], wouldn't care about the blows at all.

In addition, this time, he wouldn't be ambushed; instead, he was going to challenge them, after having made a plethora of preparations!

"Little brother...don't be in too much of a rush. We really don't need to rush it," Xiyue said hurriedly. "We can wait for a while longer; let's wait until you grow more powerful. I've already waited for so many years; there's no rush. Little brother, I have no other family members left; I truly do not wish to lose you as well."

"Cousin, am I the rash, impetuous sort?" Ning asked.

Xiyue was startled.

She thought back through her memories...

Although Ning could be quite berserk at times, he handled every matter in quite a competent manner. For example, when he elected to participate in the Conclave of Immortal Destiny, many had believed that given he had only trained for thirty years, he should not attend. But in the end? He became the champion of the Conclave!

Last time, he had been ambushed by four mighty Celestial Immortals. He had been completely caught off-guard, which was why he had ended up in such a sorry state! And yet...he still didn't let the Youngflame clan get what they wanted!

Given that Ning was now making such meticulous plans and preparations, and given that his power had just increased dramatically... he naturally had a fairly high degree of confidence in his plans!

However, there was no such thing as an absolute. Ning wouldn't dare say that he was 100% confident in his plans. An ancient clan like the Youngflame clan might, for example, suddenly reveal a True Immortal or Empyrean God; at that point, Ning would just stare blankly. Still, based on what Ning knew...the Youngflame clan shouldn't have any Pure Yang True Immortals or Empyrean Gods.

"You've truly decided?" Xiyue looked at Ning.

"Yes." Ning nodded. "I've just come to let you know, cousin, before I actually carry it all out."

"Little brother, I truly can no longer see through you. Ever since you returned to the world of the Grand Xia...I've been unable to see through you. However...Grandfather spoke truly; you are now very powerful." Xiyue looked at Ning. Gritting her teeth, a hint of fierceness flashed through her eyes as she said, "When you go deal with the Youngflame clan, I shall go with you!"

"You'll come with me?" Ning was surprised. She was merely a Primal

Daoist!

"Little brother, you can go kill the more powerful Immortal cultivators. As for the weaker ones and the mortals...leave all of them to me. In the past, every member of my Yuchi clan, men and women, children and elders, cultivators and mortals...they were all slaughtered. Not a single one of them escaped the butchery." Xiyue ground her teeth with hatred. "What they did to my Yuchi clan in the past...I'll repay it unto them!"

"Killing mortals?" Ning shook his head. "No. You are an Immortal cultivator; killing mortals will incur enormous amounts of sin. In addition, the Youngflame clan has simply far too many clansmen. To kill that many mortals...karmic sinflames would instantly descend from the heavens. Given your level of power, the karmic sinflames would instantly roast you to death."

Those with a low level of sin would be surrounded by a corrosive sin-aura. Those with a high level of sin would be surrounded by the bloody light of sin. For example, eleven of the Twelve Monster-Kings of the Eastern Flows were all surrounded by the bloody light of sin. If one had an even higher level of sin...karmic sinflames would descend! Ordinary Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals would be immediately roasted to death by the descent of karmic sinflames.

Only truly terrifying demons were capable of surviving within karmic sinflames. His cousin was definitely not strong enough to resist karmic sinflames!

"I have many subordinates. I'll lead them; in fact, I'll even command a large group of soldiers to come with me." His cousin gritted her teeth and said, "You kill the strong ones, they can kill the mortals. This was what the Youngflame clan did!"

"Even so...as the commander, a degree of sin will gather around you as well. The Youngflame clan has millions of Immortal cultivators. As for mortals...they number in the hundreds of millions, at least. It's hard to say exactly how many of them there are. Countless tiny strands of sin will accumulate upon you...and you'll at least have the bloody light of sin

covering your body,” Ning said.

His cousin’s eyes were completely red. “I’m not afraid. I’ve waited far, far too long for this day.”

“There’s no way I can agree.” Ning rose to his feet. “Wait for news from me.”

Swoosh!

Ning soared straight into the air, quickly vanishing from the skies above the imperial capital of the Grand Xia.

Xiyue was momentarily startled. She then let out a fierce, frustrated scream. She wanted to go kill!

Swallow Mountain.

Ning led Uncle White back to Swallow Mountain. He also summoned Little Qing to him, and together they went to Mu Northson’s room.

“Senior apprentice-brother.” Northson looked towards Ning, his body shaking, his eyes bloodshot. “Are we going to the Youngflame clan now?”

“Of course. Master has waited for this day for a long, long time,” Little Qing said excitedly. “Master...I wish to go as well.”

Ning frowned. “I thought I told you that you are to stay at Swallow Mountain and guard it.”

“Master, look.”

Little Qing’s body flickered. Instantly, a second white-robed Little Qing appeared next to her. Both of them emanated the aura of a Void-level Earth Immortal.

“I know that you have a Primaltwin...eh? Your Primaltwin has become a Void-level Earth Immortal as well?” Ning said with some surprise. He had many treasures; naturally, he wouldn’t be stingy with them with Little Qing and Uncle White. Uncle White hadn’t created a Primaltwin, because the creation of a Primaltwin required the splitting of one’s soul, causing the power of both souls to start off much lower.

Uncle White knew that Ning was going to deal with the Youngflame clan, and so he wasn't willing to lower his power. Little Qing, however, was adept at survival to begin with; naturally, she had prepared a Primaltwin long ago. By now, her Primaltwin had also become a Void-level Earth Immortal.

"My Primaltwin can stay here at Swallow Mountain; it's enough to control the grand formations," Little Qing said hurriedly. "Master, I'm your spirit-beast. You are going out to do battle; how can I not accompany you? In addition, you don't need to worry about my safety at all; I'm far faster than you when I use a Greater Spatial Teleportation. You have to use Dao-seals, whereas I can use the technique directly."

Ning nodded. "Fine! However, you must obey my orders."

"Of course. You are my master," Little Qing said with a chortle.

"Mm." Ning nodded, then looked towards Northson. "Junior apprentice-brother, I need to rest a bit. Tomorrow morning, we'll head to one of the three commanderies the Youngflame clan controls; Easthill Commandery."

The Youngflame clan was even more powerful than the Northmont clan; it had three full commanderies. Thus, their headquarters were divided into three parts as well; or at least, that was what the intelligence reports were able to discover. Every single one of the headquarters took up an enormous amount of land, and the number of clansmen numbered in the hundreds of millions! There were more than a million Immortal cultivators in total; this was definitely equivalent to some of the largest clans. Each of the headquarters was comparable in power to the Northmont clan's headquarters in Stillwater Commandery.

Three great headquarters; Ning was only able to choose one.

"Alright." A savage light flashed through Northson's eyes. "Tomorrow. Fine. Tomorrow, then."

He looked with a bit of worry towards Ning.

"Senior apprentice-brother, if you aren't confident in carrying it out,

don't go. Don't go too crazy just because I want to take revenge."

Northson was worried that Ning was being rash.

"My differences with the Youngflame clan are as irreconcilable as water and fire. I was willing to bide my time and endure it, but the Youngflame clan refused to give me time," Ning said. "In the eyes of the Youngflame clan, I'm a potential threat; they won't permit me to continue to grow." The longer Ning lived, the more the Youngflame clan would worry. After all, Ning's rate of improvement was simply too fast.

"Right." Northson nodded lightly.

"Take a rest." Ning laughed, then gently patted Northson on the shoulder. "Get some rest tonight and recover some of your energy. Tomorrow, we'll truly begin our war against the Youngflame clan. We'll be facing an ancient clan that has existed for countless years, and all the tricks they have to muster. The number of Immortal cultivators alone is at least more than a million!"

Northson, upon imagining a million cultivators, couldn't help but feel his heart tremble. Although most likely the vast majority of these cultivators were merely Zifu Disciples...quantity was a quality of its own as well. In addition, this was the headquarters of an entire tribe; it would be surrounded by layers of formations, and even Celestial Immortals who barged in would probably perish. Only Ning, by relying on the Fifth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], would dare to charge straight in!

"Senior apprentice-brother, you have to be careful." Northson looked at Ning, filled with worry. Although he was going to fight as well...he had already prepared himself mentally for death! In addition, there was an enormous difference in power between himself and those four Celestial Immortals; thus, the high-level fights would primarily depend on Ning's power.

"Hahaha..." Ning laughed. "Don't underestimate me, your senior apprentice-brother."

.....

Night. It was as cool as water.

Ning was seated by himself atop the roof, staring down towards the bright moon in the sky.

"Tomorrow, I shall battle against the Youngflame clan."

"Father. Mother. Just watch and see. One of the ten most powerful clans of the Grand Xia Dynasty, the Youngflame clan...I'll rock them from top to bottom," Ning said softly. He then took a big gulp out of the gourd of wine he was holding in his hands, letting the wine spill out and dribble across his chest. Alas...his father and his mother wouldn't be able to see any of it.

In the past, his father and his mother hadn't even wanted for him to go deal with Snowdragon Mountain! Snowdragon Mountain had been destroyed years ago. Nowadays, in Ning's eyes...it was nothing more than a small local sect. Annihilation of such a sect was simplicity itself.

The Youngflame clan...now that was a truly tough nut to crack!

However, it was nothing more than a tough nut.

Four Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan had acted against him, but hadn't been able to successfully do anything to him back then...to say nothing of now!

.....

The next day. Dawn.

Ji Ning, Mu Northson, Uncle White, and Little Qing all soared into the skies of Swallow Mountain together.

Two youths, a large snowy-white hound, an azure serpent...this was a gathering that looked quite odd, and it was a gathering that was going to venture forth to deal with the ancient Youngflame clan! They were going to charge straight into the headquarters of the Youngflame clan!

"Let's go." Ning unleashed his elemental ki, covering everyone with it before performing a void blink.

.....

Easthill Commandery. This was an extremely distant commandery that

had many mountains and rivers within it. In terms of raw size, it was significantly larger than Stillwater Commandery.

The Oldjade mountain range was the most important mountain range in Easthill Commandery, because this massive mountain range that stretched nearly a million kilometers was one of the three headquarters of the Youngflame clan. There were an unfathomable number of Youngflame clansmen who lived here, with the number of Immortal cultivators numbering over a million. As for the number of formations and restrictions laid down here over the course of countless eons, that was even more unfathomable.

Whoosh.

Four figures suddenly appeared in midair. Two youths, a large snowy-white hound, and an azure serpent.

Chapter 20: Old Demon Windraiser

Ji Ning and the others stared far away at the distant mountain range, which stretched off as far as the eye could see. Although they had yet to enter, they each sensed the waves of power and might emanating from within the mountain range. This was the might of a grand formation that was continuously active, protecting the mountains.

"Senior apprentice-brother, how do we get in?" Mu Northson sent frantically.

Little Qing looked forward, then mumbled to herself, "Countless mortals, over a million Immortal cultivators...who knows how many formations have been set up to protect an ancient headquarters like this one, that has existed for countless eons. The successive generations of Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan have definitely strove to set down many formations. A place like this is like a steel wall. How are we supposed to get inside? What should we do?" Little Qing glanced at the nearby Ning.

"Senior apprentice-brother..." Northson looked towards Ning as well.

In the face of a place like this, they didn't have any ideas on how to enter.

It was too tightly guarded!

This was a far more tightly guarded place than the Eastwoods mountain range; although this was just one of three bases for the Youngflame clan, it still surpassed the headquarters of the Northmont clan of Stillwater! The Youngflame clan had definitely given birth to a good number of Celestial Immortals, over the passage of countless years from the Fiendgod Era to the present day. The headquarters of such an ancient clan...entering it probably was as dangerous as entering Swallow Mountain, which was guarded by the grand formations of the Mount Innerheart League!

"Of course we can't force our way in." Ning shook his head. "It is layered with formations; once we force our way in, we'll instantly become

trapped within the formations.” When Bloodcloud Hall had attempted to assassinate him, Ning had been trapped within the formations of the Eastwoods mountain range; in the end, he had to use a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal in order to escape.

“Then what should we do?” Northson asked.

“Have you forgotten how I entered the forbidden region?” Ning glanced at Northson.

Northson was startled.

“I’ll use the same method to infiltrate the Oldjade mountain range,” Ning said with a smile. The practitioners of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] were the most mysterious and secretive figures of the entire Three Realms; they were able to use the art to easily slip into Immortal residences or even the Celestial Court.

Just two hours later.

Within Ning’s mobile Immortal estate.

“Spare me, senior. Spare me, senior! If I, Youngflame Blackburn, have offended you in some way, senior, please let me know!” A tall, thin, middle-aged man was staring in terror at the masked, black-robed man before him. He didn’t even think about fighting back...because this person was simply far too powerful.

He had clearly been within a commandery city earlier, but this person had suddenly appeared, completely paralyzing him through just a simple Dao Domain, then drawing him into a mobile Immortal estate.

For his Dao Domain to be so powerful...this person could probably kill him, Youngflame Blackburn, with a single thought.

“If I wanted to kill you, you’d already be dead,” the masked, black-robed man said in a gravelly voice.

Blackburn let out a secret sigh of relief. If this mysterious figure truly had killed him right away, that really would’ve been a miserable way to die. He hurriedly said, “Senior, if there’s anything you need, please let me

know; this junior shall definitely do everything in my power to accomplish it for you.”

“Oh?” The masked, black-robed figure seemed to chuckle. “I wish to know a few things, so...I wish to examine your memories.”

“Examine my memories?” Blackburn was surprised. He said uneasily, “Senior...”

“I will soulscour you. If you don’t resist, the side effects probably won’t be that bad. If you do, however...I’ll have to use force,” the masked, black-robed man said. “Will you accept it willingly or not?”

Blackburn felt both miserable and helpless. Hesitating for just a fraction of a moment, he gritted his teeth then said, “This junior is willing.”

“Mm.” The masked, black-robed man immediately reached out, pressing his hand against Blackburn’s head, then using the Thousandstar soulscouring technique.

.....

In midair.

Ning was standing atop a cloud. He nodded slightly. “The first was a Primal Daoist. Primal Daoists have fairly high statuses within the Youngflame clan and know a decent amount of things. From what I saw... in Easthill Commandery, there is a clear stratification amongst its denizens, as well as many layers of formations. Even a Primal Daoist like Youngflame Blackburn was only permitted to go to some of the regions in the commandery, and he only knew the methods to bypass a few of the formations.”

This soulscouring had only resulted in him learning about part of the grand formations set up in this particular area.

“It seems I need to find more Primal Daoists and do a close investigation.”

Swoosh. Ning immediately used a void blink and disappeared.

.....

Ning began to act against a number of Primal Daoists of the Youngflame clan within the Easthill Commandery. Different Primal Daoists had different statuses; some knew many things about the formations protecting their headquarters, while some only knew a little bit! Slowly, Ning began to build a general picture of the formations within the Oldjade mountain range of Easthill Commandery. He conveyed what information he had to Uncle White.

Uncle White was a grandmaster of formations; he would definitely be able to come up with a superior method for breaking in!

.....

“Hahaha! You want to soulscour me?” An azure-robed man let out a wild laugh. “As I thought...you are the one the Patriarchs spoke of, yes? Ji Ning!”

“Not good.” The masked, black-robed Primaltwin Ning instantly felt that something was wrong. He immediately willed it...

Whoosh!

A sword-light appeared out of nowhere, piercing straight through the body of the azure-robed man, chopping it in half. The azure-robed man’s Primal Turtle-Snake instantly flew out, but as the sword-light chopped towards it, the Primal Turtle-Snake was shattered as well. The human-shaped soul within began to attempt to leave for reincarnation.

“Do you think that just because you tried to self-detonate, that you would avoid my soulscouring?” Ning held a black jewel in his hand. The black jewel produced a powerful attractive power, drawing the man’s soul inside.

When killing a Primal Daoist and destroying his Primal Turtle-Snake, one would generally destroy the soul as well. However, Ning’s power vastly surpassed his foe’s; he was able to destroy the Primal Turtle-Snake but keep the soul intact. His plan was to collect it then soulscour it.

“Soulscour? Hahaha...” The human-shaped soul of the azure-robed man

let out an incomparably wild laugh. His soul began to crack apart...and then it completely shattered and dissipated.

"What?!" A moment later, Ning let out a sigh to himself.

Experts with sufficiently powerful souls were capable of splitting their souls. For example, long ago Ning himself had split his soul to create his Primaltwin...but what this person had just done was to split his soul into multiple pieces, causing it to shatter.

"He actually shattered his own soul." Ning sighed to himself. "It seems the Youngflame clan does have some extremely loyal clansmen."

"He was able to guess that I am Ji Ning? He was quite smart."

Ning didn't actually feel surprised; this was because he had already soulscoured quite a few Primal Daoists, through which he discovered that the Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan had already sent out an order for all members of the Youngflame clan to be extremely careful. They had to keep an eye out for Ji Ning secretly infiltrating their clan!

"Last time, four Celestial Immortals worked together to attack me. Although they failed, they were able to learn that I most likely train in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]," Ning mused to himself. "Practitioners of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] are highly skilled in transformations and subterfuge; it would be strange if the Youngflame clan didn't take precautions."

"But so what if they do take precautions? In the Three Realms... practitioners of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] can enter and depart from even places as tightly guarded as the Celestial Court as they so please."

This was the Dao of a King!

Even though they knew that Ning trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], there was no way they could prevent him from entering the Oldjade mountain range.

But despite that...

Given that the enemy was prepared, it would be harder for him to reach

his target.

"The Youngflame is probably already aware of this Primal Daoist's death. However...he's just a single person. It shouldn't be too bad," Ning mused to himself. The Youngflame clan was an enormous organization; given that this was an era of dangerous undercurrents, the death of a single Primal Daoist shouldn't be viewed as a major matter. But if two died in a row...this would probably draw attention.

"I'll leave it at this for now."

"Uncle white." The black-robed Ning walked to a hall within his mobile Immortal estate. Within the hall were Uncle White, Mu Northson, and Little Qing.

"How'd it go?" Uncle White looked over.

"Although I carefully compared every person I seized to figures I saw in the intelligence reports of the Heavenly Treasures Mountain... unexpectedly, in the end, I still ran into one that wasn't afraid of death." The black-robed Ning shook his head. "That Youngflame Xun committed suicide; I wasn't even able to forcibly soulscour him."

"In any large clan, there will always be some who are willing to sacrifice themselves for their clan." Uncle White nodded.

"In total, I soulscoured eight Primal Daoists. I've already acquired quite a bit of information regarding the Easthill Commandery headquarters of the Youngflame clan." The black-robed Ning said, "As to how we should deal with those formations...that'll be up to you, Uncle White."

"Let me think it over." Uncle White nodded.

The memories of each of the eight Primal Daoists included parts of the formations protecting their clan's headquarters. Ning recorded everything down onto a jade strip, then handed it to Uncle White.

Uncle White, ruminating through these findings, was able to come to a rough conclusion regarding the formations around the Oldjade mountain range.

.....

Within the Oldjade mountain range of the Easthill Commandery.

This mountain range of more than a million kilometers was simply too vast; the mountain range even had some plains, lakes, and a large number of commandery cities within them. There were very, very many commandery cities that took up a hundred or a thousand kilometers, and a large number of ordinary mortals resided within them. Every single city was able to support over ten million people.

Lakes, plains, rivers, mountains...the commandery cities were located everywhere. The Oldjade mountain range was definitely the undisputed terrain of the Youngflame clan!

“Patriarch! Patriarch!” A youth came running towards a palace at high speed. This palace was completely composed of white jade, and it was surrounded by a large number of beautiful maidservants. Each of these maidservants could be described as peerless beauties. Some were so scantily clad, they might as well be naked; one could see their bare bodies through their gauze-like clothes. Some, however, looked like rich noblewomen, while others looked like young maidens...

The youth cleared his throat.

These maids were beauties which the Patriarch had found from throughout the world, then gathered here to serve him and him alone.

This Patriarch...he was a Loose Immortal with a very special status, here in the Oldjade mountain range. He was a Loose Immortal who had lived for more than a million years; Immortal Windraiser. However, outsiders rarely referred to him as ‘Immortal’; most referred to him as that ‘old demon, Windraiser’. He truly was an evil figure.

“What is it?” A black-haired, black-bearded old man was currently cuddling with two beautiful woman, seeming quite pleased and relaxed.

“Patriarch, Third Uncle-Master, Third Uncle-Master, he...he...” The youth hurriedly fell to his knees. He cried out, “Third Uncle-Master died!”

“What?!”

Old Demon Windraiser's face instantly changed tremendously.

Amongst the Primal Daoists who currently resided within the Youngflame clan's Easthill Commandery, the apprentice-nephew which Windraiser favored the most was Youngflame Xun. Although Xun wasn't his disciple, he still viewed him with great favor! In fact, he felt that Youngflame Xun was like a carbon copy of himself when he was young; he stooped to all sorts of vile deeds, but was absolutely and ardently loyal to the Youngflame clan.

In addition, he was also very talented. Thus, Old Demon Windraiser often arranged for Youngflame Xun to handle tasks for him in the outside world; only by experiencing dangers and trials in the outside world could one truly grow, after all. But he didn't expect that Xun would actually die! As one of the important younger disciples of the clan, he had naturally been given protective treasures...but he had still died...

"Damn. Damn!" Old Demon Windraiser was so angry, he gnashed his teeth.

"Investigate. Investigate!" Old Demon Windraiser bellowed with rage, "Investigate and find out exactly how Youngflame Xun died!"

Chapter 21: Kill!

With the mobile Immortal estate.

Ji Ning, Mu Northson, Uncle White, and Little Qing were gathered together.

"That should more or less be it." Uncle White nodded lightly after looking once more through at the enormous map placed before him.

"And?" Ning, Northson, and Little Qing were all staring at the enormous map before them, but weren't able to understand it.

"Their defenses are airtight. There's no flaws at all." Uncle White sighed.

"No flaws at all?" Ning was shocked.

"Based on what you found when you did the soulscouring...the Youngflame clan has a total of three headquarters, each of which has more than a hundred Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals." Uncle White nodded. "This Easthill Commandery alone has more than a hundred Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals scattered around the Oldjade mountain range. They definitely aren't gathered in one place, where you can destroy them with one blow. They are scattered far apart in different locations, where they protect the countless formations that are present. Thus...it's extremely difficult to completely destroy the entire Oldjade mountain range!"

Ning frowned. "There's nothing we can do?"

"No, but...the Easthill mountain range is too big. So, there is something of a weak point," Uncle White said confidently. "But in truth, it isn't really much of a weak point."

Little Qing said impatiently, "Uncle White, what's the weakness? What have you discovered?"

"The Oldjade mountain range is nearly a million kilometers long. For a giant formation to cover a million kilometers...there's no way for Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals to activate and sustain a formation of such

size," Uncle White said with a laugh.

Ning's eyes instantly lit up.

"Are you saying..." Ning revealed a pleased look.

"There's a limit to the reach of an Immortal's elemental ki. If they are too far away from the formation-base, they will be completely unable to control it. For example, when we are a million kilometers away from our magic treasures, we are similarly unable to control them," Uncle White said. "Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals, when controlling formations, generally have to be within a hundred thousand kilometers or so; that's their limit."

"The Oldjade mountains are so enormous..."

"There's no way Celestial Immortals can be constantly maintaining a formation; naturally, they would have Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals do it for them! From this, it is very easy to guess that they must have divided the entire Oldjade mountain range into ten or so regions, each of which has around ten or so Immortals that are maintaining the formations," Uncle White said.

The Oldjade mountains were nearly a million kilometers long, but merely around a hundred thousand kilometers in width.

"There are over a hundred Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals in the Oldjade mountain range, but only a few of them are controlling the formations," Uncle White said. "What we need to do is find out who is controlling the formations. Once we kill one...for a short period of time, the hundred thousand kilometer region under his control will be temporarily unprotected."

"However...we'll need to be fast."

"That's because the Celestial Immortals will quickly arrive. I am certain that there are even more powerful formations within the Oldjade mountain range which are controlled by the Celestial Immortals," Uncle White said. "Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals are only able to cover a fairly small amount of territory, but Celestial Immortals are able to

control and protect the entire mountain range!"

Ning, Northson, and Little Qing all nodded.

"According to our intelligence report, the Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan generally don't reside within the headquarters; they are hidden within an unknown area. Once the clan encounters danger, they'll definitely hurry out to meet it," Uncle White said. "Thus...as I see it...we should do this..."

Uncle White explained his plan in detail.

Ning originally had a rough plan in mind, but now, based on what they actually faced, it had to change.

Their new plan took form!

"It'll definitely succeed." The nearby Little Qing was incomparably excited upon hearing it.

"Let's make the Youngflame clan feel regret." Northson's eyes were filled with savagery.

As for Ning, he laughed and said softly, "Our first target will be the number one figure amongst the Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals stationed here in the Oldjade mountain range...that old bastard who has lived for more than a million years...Old Demon Windraiser!"

Dusk.

Ning executed the Seventy-Two Transformations, transforming into a short, pudgy cultivator. This short, pudgy cultivator flew atop a cloud towards the Oldjade mountain range. He carried a talisman on him, causing the formations around the Oldjade mountain range to leave him completely unharmed.

"Unfortunately, I'm not going to be able to stealthily and silently kill Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals within the Oldjade mountain range," Ning mused to himself. "Otherwise...I could ambush them one by one, wiping them all out. Without any Loose Immortals, the entire Oldjade mountain range would be completely defenseless for a period of time."

“Brother Voidgrace.” As the short, pudgy cultivator flew forward on his cloud, a voice suddenly called to him from afar.

The short, pudgy cultivator turned to look towards the distant. A white-haired elder was flying towards him aboard an Immortal crane. The white-haired elder laughed and said, “Brother voidgrace, long time no see! This old man has wanted to see you quite dearly!”

“You actually want to see my treasure, right?” The short, pudgy cultivator laughed oddly. “Don’t be impatient. This time, I came back on important business. Next time, I’ll definitely bring the treasure.”

“Don’t forget it.” The white-haired elder laughed merrily, then flew away atop his Immortal crane.

The short, pudgy cultivator watched as the white-haired elder departed, then pursed his lips. “Old bastard. I’ll let you live a bit longer...but next time, I’ll wipe you out.”

The short, pudgy cultivator Ning had just transformed into was known as Daoist Voidgrace. He had a belly full of bad designs, and was a sinister, vicious man. Because he was often stationed in the outside world, he was able to procure things that were completely forbidden to be traded in here, such as beautiful women and children, for the cultivators here that wanted them. Daoist Voidgrace would often deliver beauties to his master, Old Demon Windraiser. It was precisely because he was Windraiser’s disciple that Ning chose him to transform into.

Whoosh.

Because he was Old Demon Windraiser’s apprentice, Adept Voidgrace naturally found his path unencumbered and unchallenged as he flew forward.

He soon arrived at that towering palace.

“Adept Voidgrace.”

“Milord.”

The palace was filled with all sorts of peerless beauties. Human

beauties, Diremonster beauties...all sorts of beauties. There were barbarian maidens, and there were even noblewomen from the imperial clan...in short, this was an absolute paradise of women! Old Demon Windraiser's number one vice was lust...and he was extremely long-lived! He had an exceptional status in the entire clan; even the Celestial Immortal Patriarchs viewed him as being extremely important.

"Heh heh...nice...niiiiice..." While walking over, Daoist Voidgrace chortled merrily.

"Where's Master?"

"Master is in the Palace of the Spring Sun."

Although the women all called out to him as he walked past them, after Daoist Voidgrace left, they all revealed looks of disgust.

They all hated this Daoist Voidgrace!

Old Demon Windraiser, at least, could be said to be a towering, dominating figure. This Daoist Voidgrace was nothing more than a petty man! However...Old Demon Windraiser liked this disciple very much.

The Palace of the Spring Sun.

This was a palace that was decorated in an exceedingly lavish manner. Its ceiling was covered with pearls that had been found in the depths of the northern seas. Its corners were decorated with violet bamboo from the southern seas. Well water from the major world of Icesnow flowed throughout the palace, and all sorts of precious treasures could be seen. It was like spring had come, causing all things to bloom. The grass was growing here, next to gurgling creeks.

"Master," Daoist Voidgrace called out from afar.

"Voidgrace?" At the front of the hall, there was a throne that was so large, it could in truth be described as a giant bed. Old Demon Windraiser was seated atop this bed, with two maids next to him feeding him fruit. When he grew excited, he would pull one of them straight onto the bed and make love to them. He glanced at Daoist Voidgrace, who walked in from afar, then laughed and said, "My dear disciple, why have you come

to see your master today?”

Old Demon Windraiser liked this disciple very much. He knew, of course, that Daoist Voidgrace was a petty man...but petty men were easily manipulated and used.

“Your disciple has a major matter to report to you, Master,” Daoist Voidgrace said.

“A major matter?” Old Demon Windraiser laughed. “What major matter?”

Whoosh!

Daoist Voidgrace was standing before the throne. His hands suddenly swelled to more than thirty meters long. A pair of giant palms that were large enough to block out the sun, covered with golden light, slammed straight towards Old Demon Windraiser.

“You...” Old Demon Windraiser was shocked. His body instantly retreated backwards at high speed. At the same time, a series of needles appeared around him. Hundreds of needles appeared, transforming into an enormous circular shield that moved to block. As he retreated backwards...his billowing elemental ki caused both of the beautiful, terrified women to be transformed into meat past.

BOOM!!!!

The two giant golden palms, carrying an aura of unstoppable might, moved as fast as lightning. One of them blasted apart the shield of needles and even shattering many of the actual needles themselves. As for the other giant golden palm, it instantly reached the body of the fleeing Windraiser.

“NO!” Old Demon Windraiser didn’t even have enough time to finish using his Greater Teleportation Dao-seal. A black light had appeared before him, but the golden palm had already reached him.

BOOM.

Everything disintegrated. Even Old Demon Windraiser’s body was

instantly reduced to dust. He was deader than dead!

Old Demon Windraiser...had perished!

“Ah?!”

“Flee, quick!”

“Good heavens!”

The other maids in the palace were all completely stunned and terrified. They had never imagined that this Daoist Voidgrace, whom they had always viewed with disdain, would suddenly strike and easily defeat the awe-inspiringly famous legend, Old Demon Windraiser, and slay him.

“Arise!” After instantly killing Old Demon Windraiser, Ning immediately soared into the skies. BOOM! His powerful body was as mighty as a magic treasure; he smashed straight through the ceiling of the Palace of the Spring Sun, reaching the skies.

“DESTROY!”

Ning instantly pulled out an Immortal sword. It was the Thousandbull Sword. “NIGHTRIVER, EMERGE!”

Rumble...

A river that was ten thousand kilometers long instantly covered this wide region, carrying infinite power as it wildly surged forth. It must be understood that under Ning’s control...this Nightriver had even been able to somewhat bind and restrict the Ba-Serpent which Bloodcloud Hall had used to try to assassinate Ning. From this, one could see how powerful it was. Even the slightest bit of power from it could kill an ordinary Loose Immortal or Earth Immortal!

And right now...Ning was activating it and unleashing its full power.

Most importantly of all! The formations around this area had previously been under the control of Old Demon Windraiser; no one had ever dared to cause trouble here, as the area within thousands of kilometers was all part of his territory. Even beyond that range, only Primal Daoists lived in the area. No commoners were qualified to live in this region.

“SWEEP IT ALL AWAY!”

Rumble...

The Nightriver was like a watery dragon, rolling over and over, smashing apart all of the giant mountains and breaking apart the local palaces. In fact, even some of the formation-bases that were hidden deep within the mountains were destroyed.

“BURROW!”

The massive Nightriver dug deep into the ground, causing the earth itself to shudder and tremble. In almost the blink of an eye, the Nightriver had completely overturned the earth within tens of thousands of kilometers around them. All mountains were destroyed, while all plains were rent apart. Every single formation-base here was annihilated...

“I have to do as much damage as I can, in as little time as possible. The Youngflame clan’s counter-attack will arrive soon.” Ning understood this very well. He immediately controlled the massive Nightriver to do more damage. The Nightriver was simply too enormous; it was able to instantly destroy and sweep through a region of ten thousand kilometers, and so it was extremely suited for large-scale destruction.

Chapter 22: Karmic Virtue, Karmic Sin

The Oldjade mountain range was extremely vast, nearly a million kilometers in length; this was comparable to an entire series of minor worlds. For example, the minor world of ‘Earth’ merely had a circumference of around forty thousand kilometers.

Deep within a mountain.

There were three young individuals walking together. One held a longstaff, the second held an greataxe, while the third was carrying a bow.

“During this trial, we definitely must make it into the top ten of Greatape City.” The greataxe-wielding muscular youth was filled with vigor and energy. “Only if we make it into the top ten will we be able to participate in the main competition that spans the entire clan. If we perform well within the main competition, we’ll be able to receive tutelage and assistance from the clan.”

“If we miss a chance like this, we’d have to wait another ten years. We can’t afford to wait.” The skinny youth who was carrying the bow on his back agreed.

“Although we are at the Xiantian level, we are still mortals...only by establishing our Zifu can we be considered true Immortal cultivators.” The black-robed maiden nodded as well.

The Youngflame clan was far too powerful. Its population was simply enormous, and so the internal struggles within the clan were extremely fierce.

“Look, what’s that?” The burly greataxe-wielding youth suddenly raised his head and stared towards the distance with utter astonishment.

“This is...”

“A huge wave...” The skinny youth and the black-robed maiden both stared in astonishment as well.

An enormous wave that seemed to stretch off to infinity was crashing

forward. This wave was ten thousand kilometers long; Xiantian lifeforms naturally wouldn't be able to see its end. Upon seeing this massive wave that was even higher than the entire mountain come crashing towards them, they were completely stupefied!

In the face of such world-breaking power, these three young Xiantian individuals weren't able to fight back at all.

Boom boom boom boom...

The towering mountain peaks were completely shattered and blown apart by the giant wave.

"No."

"I can't accept this. I haven't even become famous yet."

"I haven't avenged my mother yet. I haven't killed the governor of Greatape City!"

The three of them all had their own dreams and desires.

They had never even left the Oldjade mountain range. For Xiantian lifeforms like them...the furthest they could travel was within a few tens of thousands of kilometers of Greatape City. Naturally...this meant that the ones they had grudges against were also members of the Youngflame clan! Although the top-level Youngflame clansmen, such as the Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals, were all quite unified, at the low-level there were many internal feuds and grudges.

This was just like China, back during Ning's previous life on Earth. China was clearly one country, but within that one country, there were countless grudges and debts, loves and hatreds. Thus, once a clan expanded to a certain level, the number of feuds within it would become tremendous.

If a peerless genius was truly produced...then when the peerless genius went to kill his own clansmen for the sake of revenge, the high-level Earth Immortals and Loose Immortals of the clan, and perhaps even the Celestial Immortal Patriarchs, would help that peerless genius become famous! This would ensure the genius' loyalty.

The Youngflame clan had quite a few evildoers within their ranks, but on the surface, at least, the rules of the entire Youngflame clan were that the members of their clan had to be treated kindly. Every single clansmen, including even the most impoverished of them, would receive at least some basic assistance to help them survive. This was to ensure that the clansmen would understand that the clan was good to them; it was only a few enemy clansmen within the clan who treated them poorly!

“No....”

The three youngsters were unwilling to accept this.

Rumble...

The infinitely mighty torrent of water from the Primordial Nightriver swept forward, roaring past them...but a strand of river water actually snaked out in front of it, completely surrounding the three youngsters.

“We...” The three youngsters were completely amazed.

They stared blankly at their surroundings. They were now completely surrounded by that strand of river water; it was as though they were in a little bubble! This bubble of water was protecting the three of them, but outside of it...the infinite Nightriver was wildly smashing and destroying everything, causing mountains to crumble and the earth to shake.

“What sort of power is this? This is our Youngflame clan’s territory. Who? Who is acting against our Youngflame clan?” The three of them knew very well that the headquarters of their clan was an extremely safe place; there was no way a disaster like this could happen. This sort of disaster...perhaps only the terrifying figures spoken of in legends could cause something like this.

“That’s...” The three of them suddenly saw a short, pudgy man who was standing high up in midair. The figure was standing at the very center of the infinite waves, with the aura of a Fiendgod.

The three of them had the feeling that it was this short, pudgy man who was controlling this infinite river.

“If I had this sort of power...” The three of them stared at the

surrounding area, where the mountains were crumbling and the earth was breaking apart. This terrifying scene of utter annihilation...although they felt terror in their hearts, they also felt desire.

.....

Greatape City. One of the many cities within the Oldjade mountain range.

This was a place where mortals lived. The Youngflame clan was a tightly stratified place; some places were meant for mortals to live in, while other places only Immortal cultivators could venture to. The entire Greatape City had a population of over ten million, including many Xiantian lifeforms, as well as a few dozen Zifu Disciples and a Wanxiang Adept who managed the city.

“Good heavens...”

“Who is doing this?”

“Who dares do this to our Youngflame clan?” On the streets and in the residences of Greatape City, the numerous denizens were staring in utter terror at the enormous wave that was sweeping towards them from the outside. The wave seemed to be as high as the heavens themselves. All of the mountain ranges outside the city were instantly breaking apart, and the earth itself was shuddering and shaking.

The wave instantly swept over this city.

But...a strand of the water of the Nightriver moved to completely cover it, causing the entire city to be protected with a ‘water globe’.

.....

If one viewed things from Ning’s standpoint, a city like Greatape City was as unimportant as a toy. Protected by the bubble, it began to sink down into the Nightriver.

Ever since he was young, Ji Ning had been trained by his father to go and kill others. In his youth, he had adventured in the world and engaged in many battles. He naturally wouldn’t show any mercy or soft-

heartedness to his enemies in the Youngflame clan. However...those people before him were merely ordinary mortals. When Immortal cultivators killed mortals, they would incur an enormous amount of sin. His Celestial Tribulation would most likely be quite difficult; if he was to kill so many mortals at a time like this, the amount of sin that would swirl around him would most likely reach and utterly terrifying level.

In addition...no matter how much hatred Ning felt, he had his limits.

For example, when he took revenge for Spring Grass all those years ago, Ning had slaughtered River He, but had spared his son.

It was the same principle.

Ning's pride forbade him slaughtering the countless ordinary mortals of the Youngflame clan.

Will these mortals eventually become Immortal cultivators? Would they become powerful experts, one day?

Let them come! They can come as they please!

If they are able to kill me, Ji Ning, then I have no one to blame but myself! However...once they act against me, I definitely will show no mercy!

.....

"A Fiendgod."

"An Immortal?"

"Good heavens."

The countless ordinary mortals of the Youngflame clan had escaped this disaster unscathed. They kept their heads raised, watching everything unfold. Upon seeing the short, pudgy man who was commanding the waters of the river, they were filled with the utmost of terror.

After killing Old Demon Windraiser, Ning had immediately begun to destroy the surrounding area, shattering all of the foundation-bases. When he made his move, he had Uncle White, Little Qing, and Mu

Northson go to Old Demon Windraiser's palace. Although the palace had been badly damaged, Uncle White immediately began to lay down formations here. The first thing he did was instantly set up a trapping formation that was ten thousand kilometers in length...and next, he began to add layers of even more formidable formations!

Ning had spared no expense on this trip. He had bought quite a few unique treasures from the Heavenly Treasures Mountain, and the expense was no less than the amount he had spent to set up formations for Swallow Mountain.

However, because Uncle White wouldn't have enough time to set up the formation...Uncle White had chosen formations that could be established in a very short period of time.

Although these formations were inferior to those three supremely savage formations of Swallow Mountain, Uncle White's scheme still involved setting up ninety-two mighty formations, all of which were within the ten thousand kilometer area. If one didn't include the three supremely savage formations, not even the formations layout of Swallow Mountain was this insane!

"Quick, flee."

"Quick!"

Ning didn't kill the mortals.

However...Ning showed no mercy to the Immortal cultivators. After destroying many of the formation-bases, their side was now able to use void blinks to engage in spatial teleportations! Some Immortal cultivators were fleeing in panic, but most were swept up by the Nightriver. Ning certainly didn't have the inclination to go and protect those Immortal cultivators.

"Kill, kill, KILL!" Mu Northson was the most savage of all. He was actually the first to charge out of Uncle White's formations. Commanding the Winged Immortal golem, he unleashed the Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds to wildly kill all before him.

Primal Daoists? Wanxiang Adepts? Zifu Disciples?

All members of the Youngflame clan were to die!

Seeing this, Ning couldn't help but secretly sigh to himself...but he didn't move to stop him. "If Cousin was here, she would also probably act in such a crazed manner. Still...I can't let junior apprentice-brother kill too many. Sin is already beginning to accumulate around him." Ning's divine sense had previously seen that the amount of karmic sin and karmic virtue around Northson was ordinary, but now...a corrosive aura of sin was slowly beginning to manifest.

It must be understood that very, very little sin would accrue from the killing of Immortal cultivators.

However, Northson was simply far too powerful. What he was engaging in was sheer butchery, and so there would still be the accrual of some sin. In addition, given that he was killing so many...the amount of sin surrounding him had increased by quite a bit.

"Junior apprentice-brother is weak. If he accrues too much sin..." Ning willed it, and the waters of the Nightriver became even more ferocious. In fact, they began to intentionally sweep towards the groups of fleeing Immortal cultivators, causing many of them to perish. Ning had always been surrounded by the golden light of karmic virtue, albeit just a little bit. Still, he clearly had reached that level.

Now that Ning was controlling the Nightriver to attack, however...the aura of golden karmic virtue around Ning began to slowly weaken...before eventually transforming into a mere fresh aura of virtue!

The density and range of that fresh aura of virtue was beginning to drop as well.

"Kill, kill, kill..."

Hatred.

Death.

The baleful auras of the slain Immortal cultivators began to swirl

around Ning, causing the three Darknorth swords in Ning's body to absorb them and transform them. When Ning had slaughtered many Earth Immortals and Loose Immortals during his battle at the Eastwoods mountain range, the Darknorth swords had reached a level of power that was comparable to that of top-grade Immortal-ranked flying swords. This time, he killed even more Immortal cultivators! However, they were all very weak, and so the amount of baleful aura Ning absorbed from them was even less than the amount he had absorbed from the bronze-armored Fiendguards.

Still...there was a significant drop in Ning's karmic virtue as he continued to butcher so many Immortal cultivators.

"Where are they? Where'd they go?!" Northson suddenly discovered that there were no more targets near him. Suddenly...he saw a commandery city in the distance, a city which Ning had protected and spared with the Nightriver. A city with many ordinary mortals.

Northson's eyes were completely bloodshot. He was in a completely berserk mode; he couldn't even differentiate between mortals and Immortal cultivators right now.

He immediately flew out, planning to continue the slaughter.

"Junior apprentice-brother, those are mortals! Mortals!"

"So what if they are?! Every member of the Youngflame clan deserves to die!" Northson was utterly berserk.

Ning roared back angrily, "If you kill them, karmic sinflames will descend and you will die as well!"

.....

When Ning killed Old Demon Windraiser and destroyed the local formation-bases, the many Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals in the surrounding areas of the Oldjade mountains had noticed it. They had all activated their own formations, at least ensuring that they could protect their parts of the Oldjade mountain range. The hundred thousand kilometer region that had been controlled by Old Demon Windraiser,

however, was completely unprotected. They didn't have a chance to do anything; the formation-bases had all been destroyed, after all.

The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals were all hovering in midair within the range of their formations, staring at the distant short, pudgy man who was controlling the Nightriver to destroy the world.

"To act with such madness...it must be Ji Ning. As for that person who is releasing the Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds, it must be that 'Mu Northson'."

"Attack. Let's attack!"

"Are we just going to sit here and wait?"

Some of the Loose Immortals were enraged.

"The Patriarchs have already instructed that if Ji Ning comes, we are forbidden from engaging him. We need to protect the clan as best as we can, while everything else will be left to them. I've already shattered the talisman; I trust that the Celestial Immortal Patriarchs will soon arrive," a green-haired Immortal said in a low voice.

Chapter 23: The Underground Copper Pillar

The western sea. The Seamless Gate's gathering spot.

Within the grand palace.

The barefoot, loose-haired Celestial Immortal Blackheaven and Celestial Immortal Violetgrass were seated shoulder-to-shoulder at the front of the palace. Many other Celestial Immortals were also seated before them. They were all staring at an enormous mirror within the palace; this mirror was currently reflecting the scenes from the Oldjade mountain range of Easthill Commandery.

"We've been searching for a chance to capture this Ji Ning, but who would've imagined that he'd go gallivanting off into the Youngflame clan's base?" Celestial Immortal Blackheaven sat there, scratching his foot as he chortled, "It seems as though I won't be forced to personally handle this puny little Ji Ning after all; the Youngflame clan will be more than enough to deal with him."

"Will the Youngflame clan be able to get it done? Last time, they were intent on handling him but ended up failing," the nearby Violetgrass said with a frown.

"The top ten clans of the Grand Xia Dynasty are all extremely powerful." Blackheaven nodded. "If the Youngflame clan truly was willing to use their full power, going so far as to spare no expenses and even take out their trump card that is meant to only be used when the entire clan is at a critical juncture between life and death...they would definitely be able to suppress a young fellow like him, who isn't even a Celestial Immortal, despite the fact that he has trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]."

"Oh?" Violetgrass was surprised.

"Just watch and see." Blackheaven was extremely confident.

.....

Within an ancient tower.

Celestial Immortals Arcanum, Goldclock, Deadwood, Sunfish, and Infatuation were all gathered here.

"There's something happening at the Easthill Commandery. They've asked us for help." The five Celestial Immortals all sensed it right away.

"At a time like this, the Kindwater clan and the other clans wouldn't be so foolish as to start a war against us. In addition, the foundation of any clan is their force of Celestial Immortals; killing Immortal cultivators and mortals of our clan makes no difference at all in that regard. Only Ji Ning, who has suffered our assaults and pursuit, would explode forth to take vengeance in this manner."

"It must be Ji Ning."

"There's no question about it."

Patriarch Arcanum and the others guessed it right away.

Because they had gone to act against Ji Ning, with the intention of not letting him continue to live...Ji Ning himself would definitely reveal his own fangs and launch his own counter-attack.

"We've been waiting for him to make his move. For him to attack our territory is equivalent to throwing himself into our hands."

"Brother Flamefish."

"Brother Flamefish."

Celestial Immortal Goldclock and Celestial Immortal Infatuation both called out.

Their voices transmitted to a completely different space. Moments later, a black foggy door appeared next to them, from which flew out a man. It was a man with unkempt red hair and who had some fish scales on his face.

"Brother Flamefish," Celestial Immortal Infatuation said with a smile, "This time, we'll have to ask you to maintain control over the grand formation to take care of Ji Ning. The rest of us will coordinate with you."

“The Three Realms are currently in a state of turmoil, and so Master is busy with important matters,” Celestial Immortal Flamefish said in a low voice. “A puny little Ji Ning has already set back our Youngflame clan multiple times; this is an insult to our Youngflame clan! This time, we must succeed.”

“Right.”

“Of course.”

“We are all aware.”

Each of the others hastened to assent.

Celestial Immortal Flamefish nodded. “Fine. Per our previous discussions...myself, Infatuation, Deadwood, Goldclock, and Sunfish shall join forces. We shall activate and execute the ‘Lesser-Yin Fiendtamer Formation’ to trap Ji Ning. Then, we shall capture him into the divine greatclock and keep him suppressed within it.” 1

“With you taking charge, Brother Flamefish, we shall naturally succeed.”

“Let’s go.”

“Arcanum, you stand guard here.”

Soon, Celestial Immortals Flamefish, Infatuation, Deadwood, Goldclock, and Sunfish all departed via a void blink as they headed towards Easthill Commandery’s Oldjade mountain range.

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“I’m back.”

In the air above the eastern seas, a spatial rift appeared, followed by the emergence of a white-haired, white-bearded elder.

“I didn’t expect that my true body would be destroyed in a single exchange.” The white-haired, white-bearded elder thought back to what he had seen, to that terrifying palm that had slammed him to death with one blow. “It seems he transformed into Daoist Voidgrace’s appearance to deceive me...it must be that Ji Ning which the Celestial Immortal

Patriarchs spoke of."

This person was Old Demon Windraiser's Primaltwin!

Old Demon Windraiser was extremely powerful; his true body stood guard over his part of the Oldjade mountain range, enjoying luxury, while his Primaltwin roamed the Three Realms, causing his power to grow even greater.

He had lived for over a million years, yet was still alive. In fact, the Three Calamities and Nine Tribulations which he had faced didn't pose too much of a threat to him.

"Ji Ning, eh?" A fierce light flashed through Old Demon Windraiser's eyes. "You destroyed my true body...do you think I'll just let you off?"

Swoosh. Old Demon Windraiser immediately used a void teleport to once more go to the Oldjade mountain range. He was naturally very familiar with the area, and he quickly passed through the layers of formations, arriving at a place where the other Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals were congregating.

"Brother Windraiser."

"Brother Windraiser."

The other Immortals all addressed him with great courtesy.

Old Demon Windraiser said hurriedly, "I'm ashamed. Ashamed! Ji Ning suddenly attacked, causing my true body to be destroyed in a single clash."

"It isn't your fault, brother Windraiser. Ji Ning is extremely powerful; even the Celestial Immortal Patriarchs gave us strict orders against engaging him. For him to be able to kill even someone as strong as you in a single clash...most likely, even if all of us joined forces against him, we would still end up dying. I really wonder what the hell this Ji Ning's training method is," a green-haired Immortal said.

"Let him be smug for now. When the Patriarchs arrive...that will be the moment of his demise."

“The Patriarchs just appeared!”

The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals could all sense the spatial ripples. Raising their heads to look, they saw five figures appear in the distance.

“Five Celestial Immortal Patriarchs?”

“Our Youngflame clan actually has five Celestial Immortal Patriarchs?” These Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals were incomparably excited. The exact number of Celestial Immortals a clan had was a tightly guarded secret! Prior to this, even the current Godplume Duke, the leader of their clan, only knew of three of them...

“A full five Celestial Immortal Patriarchs are making their move. This Ji Ning is dead for sure.”

All of them waited eagerly.

.....

The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals only dared to remain in hiding behind the formations. As far as Ning was concerned, they were nothing more than dancing, prancing clowns; he wasn’t worried about them at all. Controlling his massive Nightriver, he continued to cause destruction everywhere. If he was using a magic treasure, he would most likely only be able to destroy around a hundred kilometers or so of land at once, but with the ten thousand kilometer Nightriver at his disposal, he was able to cause devastation on a much wider scale.

“Thankfully, I have the Thousandbull Sword...otherwise, this plan wouldn’t be feasible.” Ning was causing havoc at an extremely fast speed.

Rumble...

Mountains continued to shatter, and the earth continued to break apart.

In addition, some lesser mountain peaks that had been fashioned into formation-bases were pushed away by the Nightriver but did not break apart. The Nightriver was able to discover many formation-bases, all of which Ning retrieved and collected. A grand formation could be destroyed

for the lack of a single formation-base. Ning didn't even know how many formation-bases he collected; most likely, it would be extremely hard for the grand formations to be set up within this hundred thousand kilometer region.

"BOOM!" After a stone disc that was more than three hundred meters long was pulled up...

"Eh? This is..." Ning's face changed.

Previously, his divine sense had only been able to discover some ordinary rocks and dirt underground. Everything seemed normal. But after that stone disc was pulled away...the scene below the ground completely changed! Clearly, there was a permanent formation stationed underground that could deceive both divine sense and coresense.

Ning's divine sense could clearly see...

That there was an enormous, fiery red copper pillar buried deep within the earth, nearly three hundred meters thick and much more than a thousand kilometers in length. Because this fiery copper pillar was buried far too deep, Ning's divine sense was only able to discover a portion of this pillar. The portion that he was able to discover, however, was already more than a thousand kilometers in length!

The fiery copper pillar was covered with an enormous number of runes.

"Now...what's this?" Ning could sense that this was definitely an extraordinary object. When his divine sense touched it, he couldn't help but feel his heart clench.

"Eh?" Ning suddenly raised his head.

Five figures suddenly appeared in the air far away.

Ning could no longer spare any time on analyzing the fiery copper pillar. "This fiery copper pillar has been buried underground this entire time, without being taken away. There's most likely no way to actually take it away! It's been buried here for who knows how long. There's no rush for me to investigate it...after I kill these bastards of the Youngflame clan, I'll come back and secretly investigate the secrets of this fiery

copper pillar.”

Whoosh!

As the five Celestial Immortals appeared, Ning immediately ceased causing havoc. He immediately used a void blink to instantly teleport to the location where Old Demon Windraiser’s Palace of the Spring Sun was.

Northson returned to that location as well. The Immortal cultivators were all dead by now. As for the mortals? With Ning blocking him, he finally relented. Next to him was Uncle White and Little Qing.

“Uncle White, how is it?” Ning lowered his head, looking at Uncle White, who was in the shape of a large, snowy-white dog.

“I’ve already finished setting up seventy-one formations,” Uncle White sent spiritually. “Although I haven’t managed to finish setting up all the formations, these seventy-one...should be more than enough.”

“Good.” Ning sent mentally, “Wait for the five Celestial Immortals to enter the formation, then activate it.”

Ning had already transformed into his usual appearance.

The appearance of the Winged Immortal golem guaranteed that there would be no way for him to hide himself this time. In addition, he had already accomplished his goal; he had completely wiped out the entire ‘safe region’ within a hundred thousand kilometers. There was no need at all for him to hide himself anymore.

.....

Within the shattered rubble, Ning stood alone. Behind him was the Winged Immortal golem, a large snowy-white hound, and an Azure Skysnake.

“Dogshit Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan!” Ning raised his head, laughing loudly. “Don’t you want to kill me? First you invited Bloodcloud Hall to assassinate me, and then you had four of your Celestial Immortals ambush me. Alas...you are completely useless!”

“What?”

“Four mighty Celestial Immortals ambushed Ji Ning?”

The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals who were hidden within the distant formations were all extremely shocked. In their hearts, they viewed their Celestial Immortal Patriarchs as lofty, exalted figures; four of them had ambushed Ji Ning, but had been unable to kill him?

Standing amidst the other Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals, Old Demon Windraiser just narrowed his eyes, watching silently.

“Since you desire to kill me so badly...I thought I’d satisfy your desire. I’ve come here, to the territory of your Youngflame clan.” Ning’s voice boomed out, filled with elemental ki as it spread in every direction. Even the countless mortals in the area could hear his voice. “I, Ji Ning, am right now. Dogshit Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan, come and kill me if you can! Ahaha, but you’d best be careful. You want to kill me, but I want to kill you too. Be wary, lest I end up slaughtering all five of you. Ahaha...”

Ning’s laughter rang out, booming in every direction.

“Did he just say, ‘dogshit Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan’?” Countless mortals were completely stunned by what they had just heard.

“Who would dare speak of Celestial Immortals in such a way?”

To mortals, Celestial Immortals were truly unfathomably exalted figures.

It was rare for the entire Grand Xia Dynasty to see the birth of even just a single new Celestial Immortals over the course of a million years. How exalted they were! But this person actually held Celestial Immortals in complete disregard...and even dared to challenge five Celestial Immortals by himself?

‘Be wary, lest I end up slaughtering all five of you!’ These words were far too dominating!

Countless ordinary mortals who heard this felt stunned...and they also felt awe and admiration.

"Will there ever be the day when I, too, would dare speak to Celestial Immortals in such a manner?" The many young men and women of the Youngflame clan knew that this 'Ji Ning' was their enemy, their foe...but they still couldn't help but feel envy.

.....

Ning stood there atop the rubble, calling out and cursing with abandon. He was waiting. Waiting for his foes to attack! Ordinary attacks using magic treasures couldn't possibly be launched from so many thousands of kilometers away. If they wanted to kill him, they'd have to move closer to him! And once they moved into attack range...they would definitely be within the formation region which Uncle White had set up.

The formation region spanned ten thousand kilometers; once it was activated, the entire area within ten thousand kilometers would fall under his control!

Although this was the Youngflame clan's headquarters...it would also be as if this was Ning's own fiefdom!

"Come! Come! Attack, you dogshit Celestial Immortals! What, are you afraid of death?" Ning laughed wildly with abandon. And indeed... Fiendgods had extremely loud voices.

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1. Shao-Yin here refers to the Lesser Yin of the Four Phases, which are Tai-Yin (Greater Yin, aka the moon), Tai-Yang (Greater Yang, aka the sun), Shao-Yin (lesser Yin), and Shao-Yang (lesser Yang).

Chapter 24: The Shaoyin Fiendtamer Formation

High in the air were Celestial Immortals Flamefish, Infatuation, Sunfish, Deadwood, and Goldclock. They stared downwards at the distant youth atop the rubble, each of them filled with rage. This was the headquarters of the Youngflame clan...but now, a region of a hundred thousand kilometers had been completely reduced to rubble.

"The kid is quite brash." Celestial Immortal Sunfish was so angry, he actually started to laugh.

"Ji Ning...the Netherworld's gates were barred, but you insisted on barging in!" Celestial Immortal Infatuation's voice was utterly freezing.

"Kill."

The five mighty Celestial Immortals were filled with murderous intent. All of them wanted to kill Ning right away! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Their five figures joined together, transforming into a five-colored mountain peak that left behind a scar in the skies as they charged straight for Ning.

Ning, seeing this, felt a surge of joy in his heart.

They really had entered!

Actually, this was something of an obvious ploy, one they were forced to 'fall' for.. Ning was standing there in the middle of the ruins of Youngflame clan's headquarters, calling them out. Were the Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan just supposed to stand there and watch? They would probably becoming the laughingstocks of the entire Grand Xia Dynasty! In addition...if they wanted to attack Ning, they had to draw closer to him, into the range of their magical artifact attacks. That meant they had to go within ten thousand kilometers.

"Uncle White, activate the grand formation," Ning sent mentally.

"Alright." Uncle White had been waiting this entire time. The five

Celestial Immortals, in the form of the five-colored mountain peak, were already less than a thousand kilometers away from Ning.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

At the borders of the region within ten thousand kilometers of Ning, three pillars of light suddenly soared into the heavens. Many other formation-bases began to fire off as well, but they were comparatively smaller in terms of the disturbance caused. In the blink of an eye, the entire region around Ning became completely trapped within a series of giant blurry formations.

"What's going on?"

"I can't see anything over there."

The distant Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals hiding within their formations were startled. Old Demon Windraiser, however, said: "No need to worry. Given the abilities of the five Patriarchs, how can they possibly be concerned with these sorts of puny formations?"

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Within the formation.

The five Celestial Immortals weren't worried at all. They had expected all along that Ji Ning had most likely set up formations within the area. Despite that, however...they had still charged in! They didn't have a choice; there was no way they could continue to let Ji Ning act so wantonly within their headquarters. In addition...they felt certain that any formations he was able to set up within such a short period of time couldn't be too frightening.

It made sense.

Even though Uncle White was a grandmaster in formations, there was no way he would be able to set up the likes of the three great killing formations of Swallow Mountain within a very short period of time. He had to rely on the fact that they had prepared an enormous amount of precious materials in order to set up many formations that were able to threaten Celestial Immortals. They would win through quantity.

“Coresense is unable to investigate this area.” Celestial Immortal Goldclock swept the area with his gaze while trying to use his coresense to investigate, but still was unable to discover anything.

“It seems that Ji Ning has an extremely formidable formations expert as his assistant.” Celestial Immortal Infatuation was quite calm. “However, all formations have their weak spots. I trust that the formations he was able to set up within such a short period of time couldn’t possibly be too profound. No rush; let’s take it slow, step by step. Let’s just ensure that Ji Ning doesn’t have any chance at all.”

“Infatuation speaks truly.”

The area around the five of them had become transformed into an enormous, five-colored mountain peak. The mountain peak forced the fog away from them, allowing their field of vision to expand to many hundreds of meters.

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“They are within the formation.” Ning, Northson, Uncle White, and Little Qing were all standing together. Ning had a smile on his face.

“These five Celestial Immortals are currently using the Five Elements Mountainhold Formation,” Uncle White said. “This is a protective formation that is fairly widespread in the Three Realms; five individuals join together, increasing their defensive power by a tremendous amount. If we only rely on the power of this formation...it will be very difficult to do anything to them.”

Ning laughed. “I have no intentions of relying on the formation to kill them. The formation is just meant to help support us! Now that they are trapped inside, they’ll be unable to use their coresense to investigate, while they can only rely on their eyes to see to a distance of hundreds of meters! I can attack when I please and retreat when I please; everything will be under my control. This has already increased my odds of success by quite a few percentage points.”

“Do you need my help?” Northson couldn’t help but ask. He was unable to disguise his desire to kill, and the murderous look in his eyes. It had

been Celestial Immortals Infatuation, Goldclock, Arcanum, and Deadwood who had destroyed the soul of his beloved...and three of those four mighty Celestial Immortals were currently present.

"Hide inside the formations; you are not to draw near us. However, you can release the Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds," Ning said with a laugh. "No need to worry about hitting me; the Thunderwinds are completely incapable of damaging me. They will, however, pose some degree of danger to those five."

"Alright." Northson began to wait eagerly.

Ning laughed, then looked towards the five distant Celestial Immortals. "Celestial Immortals, to the Youngflame clan, are their real foundation and source of power, right? If I were to kill a few...the Youngflame clan would definitely feel heartache and regret!"

Whoosh. Ning instantly transformed into a streak of light, charging forward.

The five Celestial Immortals remained quite calm. They continued to maintain their Five Elements Mountainhold Formation while carefully investigating the nearby formations.

"This formation is quite extraordinary." Celestial Immortal Infatuation began to frown after doing a cursory inspection of the surrounding area. "To defeat it...it isn't something that we can do in just a day or two."

"Then what should we do?" Celestial Immortal Goldclock asked impatiently, "The more we delay, the more powers within the Grand Xia Dynasty will know of this matter. Our Youngflame clan will have truly lost face, then!"

"No time to worry about face right now; if we can kill Ji Ning, it will all have been worth it," Celestial Immortal Infatuation said.

"Don't be impatient." Celestial Immortal Flamefish chortled, stroking his long beard. "Ji Ning set down these formations, then acted so brashly towards us, all because he wanted us to enter this region. After we do so...he'll naturally come to attack us. If not, we could all simply leave by using

Greater Teleportation Dao-seals. All we need to do is wait. Ji Ning will quickly come to attack us. By then, we can use our Shaoyin Fiendtamer Formation to capture him and suppress him. That's all there is to it."

"That makes sense." Celestial Immortal Sunfish laughed coldly. "The moment he attacks is the moment of his capture. After we capture him, we'll use Greater Teleportation Dao-seals to leave."

The five mighty Celestial Immortals continued to fly forward, investigating the surrounding area while waiting for Ji Ning's arrival.

Suddenly...

A golden hand, fingers formed into the shape of a sword, came chopping out through the mist up ahead. It moved as fast as lightning, instantly arriving before the five Celestial Immortals. The golden sword-fingers were at least three hundred meters long, like the fingers of a true divinity. They carried an unstoppably fierce sword-aura, and with a booming sound stabbed straight into the five-colored mountain peak.

The five-colored mountain peak trembled violently, almost at the point of shattering.

"Careful."

"Such power."

"Let's do it!"

The five mighty Celestial Immortals were all shocked. They didn't expect that Ning's very first attack would nearly collapse their defensive formation. All of them immediately began to activate their Immortal energy, quickly stabilizing the five-colored mountain peak.

"You WILL break for me!" A youth suddenly appeared, with three heads and six arms. His six arms chopped through the air, his enormous palms all formed into sword-fingers and being used like swords! These sword-fingers were so powerful, they definitely were not any weaker than the Thousandbull Sword and other Immortal swords of its class.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Six powerful sword-fingers struck

towards the five Celestial Immortals in a frenzy.

“Formation!” The scale-faced Celestial Immortal Flamefish let out a loud roar. A black set of chains instantly appeared within his hands. The black chains rapidly grew longer, stretching out to more than three thousand meters. Moments later, the other Celestial Immortals also manifested sets of black chains within their hands as well. There were a total of five black chains, each of which looked absolutely identical...but in truth, the aura of each was completely different.

“FIENDTAMER!” Celestial Immortal Flamefish roared angrily.

Clang clang clang...

The five enormous black chains were like five tentacles that stretched out from some abomination. They covered the skies as they flew forward to entangle Ning. In fact, the five chains even had circles of water that swirled around them.

“What’s this?” Ning was startled. He didn’t dare to be rash, and so he immediately swept out with a palm. The palm rapidly expanded in size to become more than three hundred meters long as it smashed against the thick black chains.

Rumble...

The golden palm collided head-on with the black chains. The powerful collision caused even Ning to be forced three steps back, and each step he took caused the earth beneath him to break apart.

“Capture him!” Celestial Immortals Infatuation, Flamefish, Goldclock, Deadwood, and Sunfish’s eyes were filled with eagerness. The other chains came sweeping towards Ning as well. The chains themselves were magic treasures, and when joined together their power would become even more formidable. In addition, they could twist and turn on themselves, changing their appearance and form. Once one was captured by them, it would be extremely difficult to break free.

During the Fiendgod Era, the Youngflame clan would often use this Shaoyin Fiendtamer Formation to capture some particularly powerful

Void-level Fiendgods.

Void-level Fiendgods varied in power; some had very high levels of comprehension and were completely comparable to the likes of Celestial Immortal Goldclock or Celestial Immortal Deadwood in power. To capture them, one would have to use an extremely powerful method...and it was this very method that the Youngflame clan was now bringing out once more. This time, to capture Ji Ning! To suppress Ji Ning!

Rumble...

Ning swung his palms, hurriedly knocking back the black chains in succession. His face changed. “What queer chains. When I strike them, they sometimes actually attempt to slip past my hands to try and entangle me. They are magic treasures...but they are quite fast when dodging. If I’m not careful, I’ll end up bound by them.”

“It seems I’ll still have to rely on the power of my magic treasures.”

The Thousandbull Sword suddenly appeared above Ning’s head. Ning let out a loud shout. “NIGHTRIVER, COME FORTH!”

Under Ning’s control, the ten thousand kilometer Nightriver shrank to a size of merely ten kilometers. This ten kilometer Nightriver was like an enormous snake that swirled around him, entangling all things in the surrounding area. Those five black chains naturally were completely entangled by the Nightriver’s waters as well. As the saying goes, when a blade cuts through water, the water will continue to flow; something like the Nightriver was extremely troublesome to deal with.

When Bloodcloud Hall had used the Ba-Serpent Formation in their assassination attempt, they had found the Nightriver’s entanglement to be quite irritating. Although these five chains were somewhat more powerful, they were still entangled and affected, causing their agility and speed to lessen dramatically.

“Ahahaha!” Ning, however, was as unencumbered as a fish in water. The five chains, with their lessened agility, were no match for him at all.

His palms would strike out!

His sword-fingers would blast forth!

The five chains were knocked all over the place, and even the five-colored mountain peak began to tremble. The faces of all of the Celestial Immortals inside began to change.

“Hold.” The five mighty Celestial Immortals instantly began to release an even-greater torrent of their Immortal energy. They began to spend more of their efforts on defense, and a large number of runes began to appear on the surface of the five-colored mountain.

“Why is this Ji Ning so much more powerful than you originally described?” Celestial Immortal Flamefish said with surprise and anger. “How is it that he’s able to so easily resist the Shaoyin Fiendtamer Formation? Infatuation, didn’t you say that he was a bit weaker than Goldclock and Deadwood?!”

Chapter 25: The Power to Uproot Mountains and Rivers

"How should I know?!" Celestial Immortal Infatuation was frantic as well. "The last time we fought with him was just half a month ago. How could I have imagined that his power would suddenly rise by so much?!"

"Last time, he wasn't even as strong as me." Celestial Immortal Deadwood nodded. "But this time, he's able to completely shut down even the Shaoyin Fiendtamer Formation. His power has already completely eclipsed that of myself and Goldclock."

"Yes." Although Celestial Immortal Goldclock didn't wish to admit it, the reality of the matter was laid bare before them.

Although their clash had been brief, the five mighty Celestial Immortals had all discovered that Ji Ning's power was much greater than they had anticipated.

The Shaoyin Fiendtamer Formation was indeed very well-suited for capturing foes! Back during the Fiendgod Era, it had been specially designed for capturing Fiendgods; it was indeed quite well-suited for dealing with Ji Ning. But to actually 'capture' him...that required the capturing party be able to completely suppress the target in terms of power.

Last time, if these five Celestial Immortals had known that Ji Ning trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], they would've invited Celestial Immortal Flamefish to come on that attempt as well. They would've succeeded long ago through their usage of the Shaoyin Fiendtamer Formation.

But this time...Ning had reached the Fifth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] and the Fourth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand]. His power was clearly on a significantly higher level! He had vaulted from being weaker than Celestial Immortals Deadwood and Goldclock to being more powerful than them! This sudden surge in strength made it so that the

Shaoyin Fiendtamer Formation was completely unable to capture Ning.

“Break for me!” Ning was wildly assaulting the five-colored mountain peak. In turn, the five mighty Celestial Immortals were striving to maintain their defensive formation.

“We’re actually being completely held down and beaten upon by him.” Celestial Immortal Goldclock ground his teeth.

“He’s become even more powerful, and he has the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] protecting him; he doesn’t even need to defend. All of us are merely Ki Refiners; once he strikes us with his body, we’ll transform into dust,” Celestial Immortal Deadwood said.

“Ugh.” Celestial Immortal Sunfish was enraged as well.

The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] was truly a pain in the neck.

Generally speaking, Fiengods didn’t dare to accept blows from magic treasures head-on. But those who trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] were absolutely able to do so!

“What should we do?” Celestial Immortal Flamefish looked at the other four. “What should we do? Just wait here?”

“How about...let’s leave for now, using a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal to depart,” Celestial Immortal Goldclock said. Although they were at a disadvantage, through working together, the five of them were indeed able to flee when they pleased.

“Flee?”

Celestial Immortal Infatuation snorted coldly, “Ji Ning is currently hiding within this great formation; if we want to deal with him, we’ll have to enter it. Since we’ve already entered it...why should we be in a rush to leave it? This time, Ji Ning has attacked the headquarters of our Youngflame clan...and so, the Youngflame clan absolutely must capture Ji Ning. This time, either our Youngflame clan lowers our heads to admit defeat, or Ji Ning admits defeat! From the moment that Ji Ning came to our headquarters, both our sides lost all other options; one side has to admit defeat!”

“We can’t admit defeat,” Celestial Immortal Sunfish said in a low voice. “There is no way our Youngflame clan can admit defeat to Ji Ning.”

“Thus...I am preparing to notify the Ancestor. I will let the Ancestor make the decision,” Celestial Immortal Infatuation sent mentally.

“You are notifying Master?” Celestial Immortal Flamefish was startled... but then he nodded lightly. “Given the current situation, the only option we have is to ask Master to decide.”

“Right.”

“Notify the Ancestor.”

“I concur.”

Celestial Immortals Goldclock, Sunfish, and Deadwood all nodded.

“I’ve already instructed my spirit-beast to go find Arcanum. Arcanum will immediately notify the Ancestor,” Celestial Immortal Infatuation said. Although they were very far away from each other, since he was a Celestial Immortal, he was similarly able to communicate spiritually with his spirit-beast at a tremendous distance.

Ning continued to attack wildly, but was unable to break through the defenses of the five Celestial Immortals. The Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds were wildly attacking as well, and Uncle White even summoned the power of the formation to generate rays of magnetic lances of light to attack...but they were still unable to break the defenses.

“It’s like a turtle-shell.” Ning was forced to temporarily give up, unwilling though he was.

Swoosh.

Ning returned to Uncle White, Little Qing, and Northson’s sides.

“Master, the defenses of these five Celestial Immortals are far too powerful. There’s no way to break through at all. What should we do next?” Little Qing asked with worry.

“What can we do? Wait.” Ning shook his head and sighed. “Celestial Immortals are Celestial Immortals, after all; last time, when they

attacked me en masse, I was at a disadvantage. This time, I've grown stronger and have the upper hand...but when faced with all five of them, I still find it extremely hard to actually defeat them. To kill a Celestial Immortal is no easy task."

Ning then laughed. "However, I never believed that I had the power to simply dominate Celestial Immortals."

"Senior apprentice-brother, you...?" Northson was puzzled.

"Junior apprentice-brother." Ning laughed. "The situation for us, compared to the situation for the Youngflame clan, is completely different. We've attacked their headquarters, and have even erected a massive, mighty formation within their headquarters. We're resting and relaxing here, completely carefree! Given how widespread the intelligence networks of the world of the Grand Xia are, the various major powers will quickly learn of this matter."

"Every day we spend here is a day where the Youngflame clan will be losing face."

"If we can spend half a year or a year relaxing here, with the Youngflame clan completely unable to do anything to us, and being forced to just watch us leave at our leisure eventually...the Youngflame clan will turn into a huge joke for the rest of the world!" Ning said, "The Youngflame clan definitely won't permit this to happen. They'll definitely come up with a method to deal with me."

"If they want to continue hiding like a turtle in its shell, there's nothing I can do about that, of course."

"But if they want to kill me...they'll have to take some risks. They'll have to enter the formation and actively attack me."

"By attacking me, they'll be taking risks...and if I can seize the right opportunity, I can kill one of their Celestial Immortals," Ning said with a laugh. "Once I kill the first one, I'll have an even better chance of killing the second one."

"This time...I intend to drag this out with the Youngflame clan as long

as I can.”

Battles at the Celestial Immortal level could drag on for many, many years.

Ning had that intention as well; to drag this out as long as possible. If he could drag this out for a year, he would cause the clansmen of the Youngflame clan to all feel nervous and restless. So long as the Youngflame clan made a single misstep, or so long as a single Celestial Immortal overextended himself...then Ning's chance would come.

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“Uncle White, every so often, use the formation to assault them. Keep them nervous and force them to keep their formations activated,” Ning suddenly said.

“Ji Ning, you are...?” Uncle White was startled. “Are you planning to take a rest?”

“No.” Ning shook his head and smiled. “I just thought of a big rod.”

“A rod?” They were all puzzled.

“I'm going to leave the formation to take a look. I'll be back soon,” Ning said with a laugh. “Uncle White, you must be careful.”

“Don't worry.” Uncle White nodded.

“Master, what sort of a rod are you going to go look at?” Little Qing asked.

“A copper one.” After speaking, Ning quickly departed. He stealthily slipped out of the grand formation, then used a void blink to go deep underground.

Ning knew very well that this battle with the Youngflame clan would most likely be an extremely long one. Since he wouldn't be able to kill those five Celestial Immortals for now...he might as well make a trip to check out that mysterious underground copper ‘rod’! That enormous copper pillar...immediately after Ning had discovered it, the five mighty Celestial Immortals had arrived, preventing him from investigating it in

detail.

Now that the five Celestial Immortals were trapped, there was no one else who could disturb him.

Crackle crackle crackle...

Ning's divine power agitated the surrounding land, pushing aside the nearby mud and rocks. He stared at the enormous, fiery copper pillar before him. This copper pillar had been here for who-knows how long... but it hadn't rusted in the slightest. It was covered with runes, and ripples of power were emanating from it.

"Doesn't seem to be a magic treasure." Ning came to this private conclusion after investigating it a bit. "Let me try divine sense."

Ning immediately released his divine sense, attempting to carefully ascertain what the real face of this fiery copper pillar was.

Last time, his divine sense had been unleashed from midair, and so he had only been able to scan a small part of the copper pillar. This time, he was right next to it, deep underground.

"This is..." Ning took a deep breath.

Good heavens!

This fiery copper pillar was nearly three hundred meters wide, but it stretched extremely deep down underground...and at the very bottom of it was an unfathomably massive fire-red stone wall! This fiery stone wall stretched out over ten thousand kilometers in the deep subterranean. There was a limit to how far Ning's divine sense could stretch. He was only able to scan a portion of this fiery stone wall. As to how large it was exactly...there was no way Ning could find out as well.

As for the giant copper pillar, it was planted firmly into the fiery stone wall!

More than three thousand kilometers of the giant copper pillar jutted out from above the stone wall! As for how deep it was beyond the wall... there was no way to know! This was because Ning's divine sense was

completely unable to penetrate through the fiery stone wall at all.

“This stone wall...” Ning immediately used yet another void blink, teleporting three thousand kilometers downwards. He quickly arrived next to the fiery stone wall.

Ning used his divine power to force aside all the nearby mud, creating an empty region deep underground.

Beneath Ning’s feet was the fiery stone wall. Next to him was the fiery copper pillar.

“What is this thing? Divine sense is unable to see through this fiery stone wall, and elemental ki is unable to bind it.” Ning was completely puzzled. He immediately gave it a hard stomp.

BOOM...

How powerful were Ning’s feet by now? It must be understood that Ning’s hands were comparable to supreme Pure Yang treasures. As for the rest of his body, every other part was comparable to at least a high-grade Immortal-ranked magic treasure. The power of his kicks would be able to effortlessly cause mountains to crumble. The enormous, fiery stone wall beneath him, however, just let out a booming sound...and was completely undamaged.

“Weird.” Ning suddenly struck down with a palm as well.

The power of the activated [Starseizing Hand] was incredibly terrifying...but the only result was yet another, deeper booming sound.

“Still nothing?” Ning was truly confused now. “Even Heaven-ranked magic treasures would be completely shattered by my palm blows, yet this fiery stone wall is completely undamaged?”

Ning walked to the enormous copper pillar that was planted firmly into the fiery stone wall.

“So the copper pillar is planted into the stone wall?” Ning carefully made a circle around the giant copper pillar, inspecting it. He pushed aside all of the mud surrounding the three hundred meter thick pillar,

only to discover...that this fiery stone wall really did seem to have a three hundred meter opening here. The copper pillar was stuck into the opening and tightly locked to it!

Ning's divine sense was unable to find the tiniest of seams to penetrate into!

"The copper pillar was planted here...I wonder if it can be pulled out?" Ning mumbled to himself for a moment as he pondered. Screw it. The Youngflame clan hid it here. Ning wasn't afraid of anything. His body flickered, and with a whoosh, he instantly transformed into a nine hundred meter tall giant.

As a Fiendgod Body Refiner at the Void level, upon using the Heavenly Transformation divine ability, Ning's maximum size was actually three thousand meters.

As a nine hundred meter tall giant, his two hands were able to effortlessly clasp around the enormous copper pillar.

"Come OUT!" Ning pulled, hard.

How much power did this pull have, coming from a nine hundred meter tall giant?

Alas...it didn't budge at all!

"[Starseizing Hand]!" Ning stared for a moment, then the divine tattoos of the [Starseizing Hand] began to flow across his hands. His power exploded dramatically, and his pulling strength increased greatly as well. He now had what felt like limitless strength, capable of uprooting mountains and rivers...

Rumble...

Accompanied by a thunderous sound, the enormous copper pillar actually began to rise slightly. When it did, all sorts of grinding sounds could be heard from deep below the stone wall, at the points where the stone wall and the copper pillar were joined together. In fact, a rumbling sound that sounded like the heavens were breaking apart could be heard as well.

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In a very distant world.

A man-shaped creature with scales on his face, a single horn on his forehead, and a body covered by azure flames suddenly opened his eyes. Boundless rage could be seen in his gaze.

“Who?”

“Who dares...WHO DARES TOUCH MY INFINITY FURNACE?!”

Chapter 26: The Deep Gorge

In front of the horned, human-shaped creature lay a massive aberration that was like a mountain-island...an armored insect-type aberration.. This bug had a triangular head which glowed with with a bronze light, making it look as though it was metallic. Its sharp fangs were clearly visible within its savage-looking mouth, and it also had sixteen knife-like legs.

This insect aberration had an aura of tremendous power, and surges of a gray aura were constantly wafting off of its body. It was simply too enormous; its body alone was nearly thirty thousand meters in length.

“Good boy.” The horned humanoid immediately opened his mouth.

Whoosh!

The utterly massive, terrifying insect actually began to shrink at a rapid pace, becoming a tiny little dot that flew straight into the mouth of the horned humanoid.

“Ancestor.”

“Master.”

Two figures instantly flew over; one a bald, black-robed man, the other a woman with dazzling golden hair. These two Celestial Immortals were acting extraordinarily subservient; they knew exactly how terrifyingly powerful this horned humanoid before them was! This was the true ancestor and patriarch of the entire Youngflame clan. The reason why the Youngflame clan had refused to bow their heads towards the Kindwater clan and instead fought with them for so many years, despite the fact that the Kindwater clan had an Empyrean God, was precisely because the Youngflame clan had the Ancestor behind them!

“Come. Accompany me on a trip to the Oldjade mountain range.” The horned humanoid had an ugly look on his face. “I want to see who it is that dares touch my things.”

“Yes,” the two Celestial Immortals said respectfully.

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As Ji Ning was pulling up the fiery copper pillar, Patriarch Arcanum was quietly standing guard within a distant tower. He had been seated in the lotus position, but his face suddenly changed. He opened his eyes wide in terror and shock. “The Infinity Furnace...who dares disturb the Infinity Furnace? Can it be Ji Ning? But, but...”

.....

Within the Oldjade mountain range. Within the massive, ten thousand kilometer formation which Uncle White had set up.

The five mighty Celestial Immortals trapped within were originally quite patient, but upon Ning beginning to uproot the fiery copper pillar...

“Not good!”

“The Infinity Furnace!”

“It must be Ji Ning!”

Celestial Immortals Infatuation, Goldclock, Sunfish, Deadwood, and Flamefish all had completely different looks on their faces now.

The copper Infinity Furnace was simply far too important to them. If Celestial Immortals were one of the pillars of the Youngflame clan, the Infinity Furnace would be one of the other pillars! The secrets of the Infinity Furnace...not even Loose Immortals or Earth Immortals knew about them. However, all of the Celestial Immortals within the clan did know, and all of them had left behind their own seals and runes upon it.

So long as anyone began to open the Infinity Furnace, they would immediately know!

“No wonder Ji Ning stopped attacking us. He discovered the Infinity Furnace! He must have found it when he was destroying that earlier area.”

“Quick, let’s go stop him.”

“We can’t let him open the Infinity Furnace.”

The five mighty Celestial Immortals didn’t hesitate at all; Celestial Immortal Infatuation waved his hand, and he instantly collected the other

four Celestial Immortals. And then, he disappeared as well, leaving behind only a mobile Immortal estate in midair.

Although Uncle White's formation-based attacks and Mu Northson's Seven Ruinous Thunderwinds were all quite formidable, they weren't able to destroy this mobile Immortal estate.

Rumble...

After the storm of attacks passed...the five mighty Celestial Immortals were gone. The mobile Immortal estate landed on the ground.

"Hmph." Little Qing blinked forward, appearing before the mobile Immortal estate. Stretching out her hand, she grabbed it and immediately began to forcibly bind it to herself. She called out, "Those five Celestial Immortals slipped away...what should we do?"

"If they slipped away, they slipped away. We are here in the headquarters of the Youngflame clan; they won't just sit and watch as we relax here. They'll definitely come again." Uncle White was quite calm.

Little Qing and Uncle White both immediately sent spiritual messages to Ning, alerting him of this.

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Deep underground.

The enormous nine hundred meter tall Ji Ning was standing atop the fiery stone cliff while tugging out the giant copper pillar at rapid speed. Rumble...with each pull, the copper tube was lifted up nearly six hundred meters! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Ning continued to pull upwards rapidly, while more and more of the copper pillar began to emerge. "I want to see how damn long this copper pillar is, and what's behind this fiery stone wall."

As Ning saw it, once he pulled out the copper pillar, he would be able to use his divine sense to investigate the enormous hole that would be left behind.

"Eh?" Ning suddenly frowned. He could sense a spatial ripple, an

extremely powerful spatial ripple.

“Greater Teleportation.” Ning immediately recognized it.

Just a few dozen kilometers away from Ning, amidst the earth and rubble, Celestial Immortals Infatuation, Deadwood, Flamefish, and the other two all simultaneously appeared. They were all utterly enraged. Around them circled that enormous five-colored mountain peak, and with a boom, they quickly began to charge towards Ning, the five-colored mountain peak crushing through all obstacles before them.

Just as they got close to Ning...

“Attack!” Celestial Immortal Infatuation gave the order. Whoosh whoosh whoosh...instantly, the five enormous chains shot out like Flood Dragons, tearing through all obstacles as they swept towards Ji Ning, who was still pulling at the fiery copper pillar.

“Hmph.” Ning just smirked. “Three Heads, Six Arms! Thousandbull Sword, let the Nightriver emerge!”

Instantly, two more arms grew out from Ning’s body, to join the two arms that were being used to pull at the copper pillar. The Thousandbull Sword appeared above his head as well, and the awe-inspiring Nightriver also emerged. The Nightriver instantly and completely submerged everything nearby, causing the five dragon-like chains to seem to have become mired in quicksand. At the same time, Ning’s four arms demonstrated tremendous power as he completely suppressed the assaults of the chains.

“Kill him!”

“Stop him!”

The five Celestial Immortals, upon seeing that the Shaoyin Demontamer Formation wasn’t powerful enough, temporarily gave up that idea for now. After all, their current goal wasn’t to trap him; it was to prevent him from pulling out the pillar! Thus, they all used various spells, magic treasures, and other abilities to that effect.

One tendril after another appeared, slithering towards Ning like giant

serpents!

An enormous fiery phoenix appeared, charging towards Ning.

A golden greatclock appeared in midair, ringing out and sending waves of power towards Ning.

“Is that all you have?”

Ning completely ignored these attacks; in fact, he actually grew even more excited. “As soon as I started tugging at this copper pillar, those five Celestial Immortals immediately teleported over here. They were clearly trapped within the formation; how did they know that I was here pulling the pillar? This pillar must be covered with various seals, runes, and restrictive spells, causing them to immediately know about this.”

“For them to attack me in such a berserk manner shows that they are truly unwilling for the copper pillar to be uprooted,” Ning guessed to himself.

The more his enemies feared an action, the more insistent he could be on carrying it out!

Many magic spells and treasures flew towards Ning, but Ning allowed all of the attacks to land on his body.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The surrounding earth and rocks were all blasted apart as a wave of power spread out towards every direction. Everything within a thousand kilometers was instantly transformed into ash, while the ground within ten thousand kilometers began to crack and shatter. In fact, the cracks spread all the way from the underground area to the surface, forming an enormously deep gorge that was nearly ten thousand kilometers deep! The earth and rocks here were quite ordinary, after all; how could they withstand the frenzied attacks of five mighty Celestial Immortals?

This was the power of Celestial Immortals!

Just the collateral damage from a battle between the five Celestial Immortals and Ji Ning would generate a gorge that was ten thousand

kilometers deep!

Ning, however, just let the attacks land; he even allowed those vines to coil around his body. Ning felt nothing but disdain for it all!

His body now had the power of the Fifth Cycle of the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art]; these attacks did nothing but tickle him! If he wasn't currently holding onto that copper pillar, then he'd have to spend some of his energy in dealing with the vines and ripping them apart. Even before Ning made his breakthrough, he was capable of breaking apart those vines, to say nothing of now, when his strength had vastly increased.

And since he actually WAS holding onto the copper pillar...if they wanted to pull them away, they'd have to pull the copper pillar away along with him!

"Get in here!" Patriarch Goldclock let out an angry roar. The golden greatclock was giving birth to unearthly ripples of attractive power, attempting to draw Ning inside it.

Ning, however, just tightly clutched the copper pillar, continuing to pull it upwards!

You want to pull me away? Then you'll have to pull out the copper pillar along with me! The attractive power of the golden clock actually just slightly hastened the rate at which the copper pillar was being pulled out.

"I can't stop him."

"He's completely ignoring our attacks. He's even able to ignore the vines! All of his attention is focused on pulling out the copper pillar." Celestial Immortal Goldclock sent frantically, "What should we do?!"

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! The copper pillar was still being pulled up at a fast, rhythmic pace. With each pull, another six hundred meters of it was pulled out. Ning's pulling speed was incredibly fast; in just this short exchange of attacks, Ning had already pulled out another thirty thousand meters. But this pillar was simply too enormously long!

"Don't attack him," Celestial Immortal hurriedly ordered mentally.

"Let's bind the pillar. Let's attack the pillar and use all our might to prevent it from going up any further."

"Alright."

"Right, we only need to stop the copper pillar from being pulled out."

Earlier, the Celestial Immortals had been in a panic; upon seeing Ning rapidly pull out the copper pillar, they had only thought to attack him. They had forgotten that preventing the pillar from coming out would serve the same effect.

The five Celestial Immortals now completely ignored Ning as they hurriedly flew towards the top of the copper pillar. They wanted to use a spatial teleportation to go there faster, but the surrounding area, within the range of Ning's divine sense, had long ago been completely spacelocked. They had no choice but to fly upwards, but flying didn't take significantly more time than using a Greater Teleportation.

In that tiny bit of extra time, however...Ning was able to pull out another thirty thousand meters of the pillar. This copper pillar was simply too massive; before he had started to pull, Ning had already seen three thousand kilometers of it!

"STOP!" Celestial Immortal Deadwood unleashed his many vines, which rapidly began to wrap around the copper pillar, generating an astonishing repulsive force.

"STOP!" Celestial Immortal Goldclock controlled his divine greatclock, sending waves of power smashing downwards on the very top of the copper pillar.

"STOP!" Celestial Immortals Flamefish, Infatuation, and Sunfish all wildly launched attacks against the top of the tower, seeking to press it downwards.

"Hahaha..." Although Ning could sense the waves of pressure slamming down from above, he began to laugh even more happily. This was because, now that the five Celestial Immortals were no longer attacking him, all six of Ning's arms were temporarily freed up to focus on

uprooting the copper pillar.

Ning's physical strength was simply too enormous. With six arms pulling together at the same time...not even the combined efforts of the five Celestial Immortals were able to keep the pillar down.

In the blink of an eye, Ning had pulled out yet another thirty thousand meters.

Thud! Thud! Thud! The fiery stone wall beneath Ning's feet actually began to rumble and shudder, as though something was slamming against it. At the same time, the countless runes that were covering the fiery stone wall began to flicker and flash.

"Not good. Ji Ning has pulled out too much of the copper pillar; the suppressive runes are beginning to destabilize." Celestial Immortal Infatuation and the other four Celestial Immortals began to grow frantic.

"This Ji Ning's strength is too great; the five of us are actually unable to suppress him."

In terms of raw strength...once the Fourth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand] was completely unleashed, Ning's raw physical strength vastly outstretched the strength of the five Celestial Immortals.

In terms of comparing magic treasures...Ning's six hands were comparable to supreme Pure Yang treasures.

How could the five of them possibly suppress the pillar?

"What should we do? If this continues, there will be a huge problem." Celestial Immortal Goldclock was beginning to panic.

"Hahaha, I knew something was strange here. The more afraid you are, the more I want to pull this thing out." Upon seeing the countless runes flashing and flickering atop the enormous fiery stone wall beneath his feet, and upon hearing the series of thudding sounds, Ning grew even more eager to see what would happen.

"Eh?" Suddenly, all five of the Celestial Immortals, as well as the pillar-uprooting Ji Ning, could sense a spatial ripple come from up above them.

It was Greater Teleportation!

“The Ancestor has arrived.” The five Celestial Immortals revealed looks of delight and joy.

Chapter 27: The Youngflame Clan's Founder

Four figures appeared in the air above the deep gorge within the Oldjade mountain range. The leader was a golden-robed man with a single horn, whose gaze was as cold as icy water. Behind him stood three other figures; a bald, black-robed man named Celestial Immortal Blackrain, a golden-haired woman named Celestial Immortal Goldcloud, and Celestial Immortal Arcanum.

The three mighty Celestial Immortals were all obediently following behind this individual.

"Who is that horned man?"

"Isn't that Patriarch Arcanum? Why is Patriarch Arcanum following behind that man so respectfully? The two who are standing next to Patriarch Arcanum are also acting with great respect, and their auras seem to be very great as well; they should also be at the Celestial Immortal level."

The Loose Immortals of the Youngflame clan, hidden away and watching from within their distant formations, were all rather dazed.

They had just seen five Celestial Immortals appear. And now...they saw four more!

They recognized Patriarch Arcanum; he had an extremely exalted status within the Youngflame clan, and generally speaking they would be able to occasionally interact with him in some manner. Right now, however, Patriarch Arcanum was obediently standing behind the horned man, and the two other Celestial Immortals with him were doing the same. This caused all sorts of speculations to run rampant through their minds.

"Can it be that this horned man is the true, actual supreme power of our Youngflame clan?"

"There were five Celestial Immortals earlier; now, four more have appeared. Can it be that our Youngflame clan actually has nine Celestial

Immortals? We're actually this powerful!? Or perhaps the horned man isn't a Celestial Immortal; is he one of those legendary Empyrean Gods or True Immortals?"

All sorts of thoughts and speculations flashed through their minds, causing these Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals of the Youngflame clan who were watching to feel extremely nervous.

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The horned, golden-robed man and the three Celestial Immortals with him stared downwards. They were able to see that fiery copper pillar located at the bottom of the deep gorge. Next to the pillar were five Celestial Immortals who were assaulting it, trying to slow it down. At the very bottom of the pillar...there was a nine hundred meter tall Ji Ning who was using six arms to tug at the pillar, wildly trying to uproot it.

"Damn him, he's moving my furnace." The horned, golden-robed man's face was sinister. "All of you, attack to suppress and press down the copper pillar."

"Yes."

The three Celestial Immortals under his command, Goldcloud, Blackrain, and Arcanum, simultaneously assented and began to fly downwards.

As for the horned, golden-robed man, he opened his mouth.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Three tiny black dots flew out, and as they did, they immediately expanded. Instantly, they transformed into a trio of terrifying aberrations that were more than thirty thousand meters long. One of them was the armored insect aberration that had sixteen knife-like legs. A second looked like a gigantic rhinoceros that had unbelievably thick skin...but on its back it had a total of twelve pairs of wings. The final creature was a viper whose body was covered with circles of black tattoos. The tattoos were extremely beautiful, and at the head of the viper, they actually came together to form the tattoo of a crown.

The horned, golden-robed man was seated atop the back of the winged rhinoceros, and he directed the three massive aberrations to move downwards, as fast as lightning.

THUD! THUD! THUD! A series of massive thudding sounds could be heard from deep within the fiery stone wall.

Ning continued to focus all his efforts on pulling up that giant copper pillar. The giant copper pillar rose up rapidly, and the more of it Ning pulled out, the more brilliant became the glow of the countless runes that had appeared on the fiery stone wall beneath Ning's feet. However, they were also beginning to flicker...and the thudding sounds began to speed up as well.

"Eh?" As Ning pulled upwards, Ning suddenly had the feeling as though deep below this enormous copper pillar, on the other side of the massive fiery stone wall, a power was beginning to awaken and grow stronger. It was as though some sort of terrifying behemoth was struggling to push up the pillar, attempting to shove it higher!

The more Ning pulled out, the more power began to gather in the deepest depths, helping push the pillar upwards nonstop. This made it easier and easier for Ning to pull it out.

"Don't act against Ji Ning. It's useless." Celestial Immortal Infatuation, upon seeing Celestial Immortal Arcanum and the other two arrive, instantly sent a frantic mental message to them. "Ji Ning has the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art] protecting him; we're completely unable to wound him. He also has a deathgrip around the copper pillar; we're completely unable to dislodge him. What we need to do right now is to stop that copper pillar from rising up."

"Right." The three Celestial Immortals who had arrived all understood this right away. They all each began to use their own techniques to push downwards at the massive copper pillar.

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"Eh?" The enormous six-armed Ning, nine hundred meters tall and located more than three thousand kilometers away from those eight

Celestial Immortals, raised his head to give them a glance. Ning's twin eyes were blazing with torch-light, and he was able to see everything with perfect clarity. He saw Celestial Immortal Arcanum and the other two join the fray as well, and also saw those three terrifying aberrations fly downwards, as well as that horned, golden-robed individual seated atop the back of the flying rhinoceros.

"More and more are coming." Ning cracked his lips wide with a grin. "This Youngflame clan really is quite powerful. An ancient clan that ranks as one of the top ten of the Grand Xia Dynasty...it really is quite extraordinary. It seems I've really kicked over the hornet's nest this time. The Youngflame clan is starting to panic."

Indeed; to the Youngflame clan, ordinary clansmen would die out and be replaced every few centuries just through aging! To the clan, ordinary clansmen and ordinary cultivators weren't that important; even if all of the people within the Oldjade mountain range perished, it would at most represent a loss of face for the clan. It wouldn't actually affect their total power much; after all, they had two other headquarters! They could let the people in those two other headquarters replenish their losses and once more occupy the entire Oldjade mountain range.

In addition, aside from their three main headquarters, the Youngflame clan also was in command of many minor worlds. Their bloodline and their clan was spread extremely wide; there was no need for them to worry about their clan being wiped out.

In truth...the Ancestor probably wouldn't even be willing to come here, if it was simply a matter of the Oldjade mountain range being destroyed.

But Ji Ning had made a move on the Infinity Furnace! This threatened one of the foundations of the Youngflame clan, and so even the Ancestor could no longer ignore it.

"So what if there are eight Celestial Immortals here? They still can't stop me." Ning continued to quickly pull out the copper pillar. In truth, the suppressive power unleashed by the eight Celestial Immortals was extremely strong, but each time Ning pulled out more of the copper pillar,

the power pushing upwards from below the pillar grew increasingly strong. In fact, the pushing power was almost comparable to Ning's pulling power by now!

Thus, Ning actually found it even easier now than he had before, despite the fact that eight Celestial Immortals had just joined forces.

BOOM!

The first of the three aberrations to fly downwards was that enormous armored insect. It completely wrapped its sixteen knife-legs around the fiery copper pillar! To this massive armored insect that was more than thirty thousand meters long, the fiery copper pillar, which was merely three hundred meters thick, was actually quite slender and thin. The terrifying strength of the armored insect caused Ning to actually sense the copper pillar sink down slightly!

"This aberration has tremendous power; if I didn't use [Three Heads, Six Arms], I would probably actually be weaker than it in terms of strength." Ning couldn't help but feel surprised as he looked at the armored insect.

Whoosh!

Next came the thirty thousand meter black serpent. It looped and coiled itself around the fiery copper pillar. Instantly, a second surge of power that was no weaker than that of the power of the armored insect came pressing down, causing Ning to feel that the pillar had grown even heavier.

THUD! THUD! THUD! Ning could sense the thudding sounds coming from deep below the fiery stone wall beneath his feet were beginning to increase even more in pace. The power below the copper pillar was still gaining in power...and by now, its power had completely eclipsed Ji Ning's. With the aid of this power...Ning was still able to continue pulling the copper pillar up!

ROAAAAR! One of the massive hooves of the winged rhinoceros slammed down directly against the very top of the copper pillar, instantly causing the entire copper pillar to grow even heavier.

"That flying rhinoceros aberration...its strength is actually even greater than that of the black snake and the strange insect?" Ning was shocked. "Even when I use the [Starseizing Hand] with six arms, my power would most likely only be on par with that rhinoceros aberration."

Ning tightly clutched the copper pillar. He could sense the power below the copper pillar growing increasingly savage; in fact, it was almost equal to and achieved a balance with the pressuring force from above that was seeking to push the pillar down. As for Ning...he was the tiebreaker that broke the balance between these two powers.

"Come out!" Ning's six arms exerted their full power; by himself, he was already comparable to the eight Celestial Immortals above him in strength, and was comparable to the flying rhinoceros, the most physically strong creature on the other side.

"What?!"

The face of the horned, golden-robed man seated on the back of the flying rhinoceros completely changed. The Celestial Immortals under his command were all Ki Refiners; in this sort of competition of raw strength, they were innately at a disadvantage! But the three aberrations he controlled were far more powerful in raw strength; he had thought that with their appearance, the pillar would be effortlessly pushed down.

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The western sea of the world of the Grand Xia. The headquarters of the Seamless Gate.

"Ahahaha, Immortal Venomfreak is in for some trouble now!" Celestial Immortal Blackheaven roared with laughter, waving his hands and feet about in delight.

"So this is the founding father of the Youngflame clan?" The nearby Violetgrass stared curiously towards the horned, golden-robed man. Although she had heard of the founder before, she knew very little about him.

Celestial Immortal Blackheaven laughed, then nodded. "Right. This is

the founder of the Youngflame clan. Back in the era of Pangu's Primordial World...there was an extremely powerful clan known as the 'Godfire' clan. This was a clan that was protected by a Daofather; this clan was one of the most supreme clans amongst the many clans of the world. A woman of this clan was raped by a Fiendgod, and she gave birth to a child that had the bloodline and lineage of that Fiendgod. This child was born looking like a hideous freak, more monster than man. Thus, he was ostracized by his clan. As a result, he never felt as though he was a member of the Godfire clan. He long ago departed from the clan, establishing his own Youngflame clan!"

"This ugly child was the founder of the Youngflame clan...Youngflame Freak. An eccentric, cautious, sinister, and truly crafty freak." Celestial Immortal Blackheaven said in a low voice, "Although he is 'only' a Celestial Immortal...even I am unwilling to make an enemy of him."

Violetgrass nodded lightly.

Naturally, she had heard of some of the legends of Immortal Venomfreak.

Within the Three Realms, there were fairly few Pure Yang True Immortals and Empyrean Gods, after all; the likes of Patriarch Lu, also known as Lu Dongbin, and other similarly formidable members of the Three Realms were people that even Celestial Immortals had to receive with tremendous respect. True Immortals and Empyrean Gods were simply far, far too few in number. By comparison, there were many more Celestial Immortals, and amongst them were some truly monstrous freaks. Although it was extremely hard for a Celestial Immortal to break through to the True Immortal level, these Celestial Immortals had reputations that were not one whit inferior to the reputation of most True Immortals or Empyrean Gods.

Celestial Immortal Blackheaven was one such figure!

Immortal Venomfreak was another!

"This Venomfreak has many clones. Although every single clone has fairly average power..." Celestial Immortal Blackheaven sighed. "Because

of how many clones he has, it is almost completely impossible to kill him. For example, this ‘Venomfreak’ before us...he’s nothing more than a single one of the clones.”

“Venomfreak’s power in battle is ordinary, but his venomous insects are far too dangerous. His abilities in raising venomous insects can be considered amongst the best in the Three Realms. I really wonder where he found this sort of a legacy.” Celestial Immortal Blackheaven sighed. “These three insects that we are seeing...each of them has combat power comparable to a supreme Celestial Immortal. In addition, these insects have no fear of death, and so they are even more terrifying than actual Celestial Immortals. Thus...even back during the era of Pangu’s Primordial World, Immortal Venomfreak was famous for being extremely difficult to deal with. Killing him would be very difficult, unless a Daofather or comparable power was to seek out and destroy every single one of his clones. A few of his insects have died, but with the passage of time, he’s been able to produce other terrifyingly strong insects as well.”

“Thus...we should ideally try to split Immortal Venomfreak from the Xia Emperor’s side and pull him over to ours,” Celestial Immortal Blackheaven said. “He will prove of tremendous use to us.”

.....

This eccentric, cautious, sinister, and truly crafty golden-robed figure stared downwards. Upon seeing that his three insects were unable to prevent the copper pillar from being pulled upwards, he began to grow frantic. He immediately sent a message with his coresense: “Ji Ning, brat, if you don’t want to die, then stop right now!”

Chapter 28: Charging Out of the Prison

"Die? From what, those three aberrations of yours?" The nine hundred meter tall giant, Ji Ning, roared with laughter. He continued to furiously pull up the copper pillar, and the force coming from down beneath it continued to strengthen, making Ning's task easier and easier.

"You...!"

The horned, golden-robed man was filled with utter rage. Because of the caution that had been bred into him during the era of Pangu's Primordial World, he never carried all his aberrations on a particular clone! This particularly clone carried three aberrations, as it was meant to protect the clan; the other clones were secreted throughout the Three Realms, and they naturally had insectoid aberrations of their own. This caused the horned, golden-robed man to feel extremely angry; if all of his aberrations were here, he would probably be able to effortlessly press down the copper pillar.

However...keeping his insectoid aberrations was an ironclad rule he had set for himself! It was the main reason why he had been able to survive through so many countless ages! He would rather pay an enormous price than to violate this ironclad rule.

"Hmph. The [Eight-Nine Arcane Art].” The horned, golden-robed man sent an angry mental message, roaring, “Although the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], you haven't even overcome your Celestial Tribulation. If I truly were to act against you...you would definitely die.”

"Come, then. Show me everything you have," Ning snickered.

A cold light flashed through the eyes of the horned, golden-robed man. He sent mentally, "Fine, then...our Youngflame clan is willing to resolve our differences with you. If you agree to cease uprooting the copper pillar and help us push it back down, we definitely won't act against you again."

"You call this 'resolving our differences'? If you don't come after me, I'd go after you! Do you think the annihilation of the entire Yuchi clan can be forgiven, as easily as that?" Ning was angry now.

“The annihilation of the Yuchi clan?” The horned, golden-robed man had an incredibly exalted status; he wasn’t even aware of such minor matters as the eradication of the Yuchi clan. He immediately sent mentally, “How about this? Those who gave the orders to deal with the Yuchi clan and everyone who acted against the Yucchi clan...I’ll capture them all and give them to you for you to deal with!”

Minor matters such as the extermination of a small clan were normally decided upon by the Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals of a clan. To this founder of the Youngflame clan, who could easily spend a million years in a single closed-door meditation session...Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals were nothing more than individuals that would die and be replaced every so often. Ordinary Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals would never even be qualified to see the founder a single time in their lives.

The Ancestor wouldn’t even care if all of the Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals of the clan were wiped out, to say nothing of a small portion of them.

“As easy as that?” Ning sent a cold laugh. “Celestial Immortal Arcanum sent people to assassinate me, and even the soul of my lifelong friend’s Dao-companion was destroyed thanks to the attacks of four Celestial Immortals of your Youngflame clan. Am I supposed to just write them off? If you really want to resolve our differences...I can agree. Aside from sending me everyone who had anything to do with the Yuchi clan’s eradication, all five of those Celestial Immortals, including Celestial Immortal Arcanum, must die! If you do that, this matter will be at an end!”

“You are going too far!” The Ancestor was enraged.

“Then don’t talk to me about resolving our differences!” Ning continued to furiously uproot the copper pillar; by now, even without him pulling at it, the copper pillar was rising up of its own volition. Even without Ning helping out, the upwards pushing force already eclipsed the downwards pushing force of the Celestial Immortals and three aberrations above.

"You can kill any Loose Immortals, cultivators, or mortals that you wish. You absolutely cannot kill my Celestial Immortals; not even one!" The Ancestor was utterly infuriated by now.

Every clan had its rules. For the sake of the clan, sacrificing a few Earth Immortals or Loose Immortals meant nothing.

But sacrificing Celestial Immortals?

The other Celestial Immortals would probably be terrified and shaken by such an action. All of the Celestial Immortals of the entire clan would feel nervous and restless. In addition, Celestial Immortals were the true foundation of any clan; there was no way the Ancestor would be willing to sacrifice Celestial Immortals.

"I can use magic treasures to compensate you," the Ancestor said hurriedly.

"Ten top-grade Pure Yang Treasures. Can you afford it?" Ning asked.

The Ancestor was so choked with anger, he couldn't speak.

Ten?

What did this Ji Ning kid think Pure Yang treasures were? Despite how powerful the Ancestor was and how long he had lived, even he didn't have ten top-grade Pure Yang treasures.

"Stop. I SAID STOP!" The Ancestor stared at how far up the copper pillar had risen...and realized that the situation could no longer be reversed. Earlier, if Ji Ning had been willing to help out a bit, they could've shoved the copper pillar back down. But now? It had risen so much that even if Ji Ning helped them out, they still probably wouldn't be able to shove it back.

"Ji Ning." The sinister eyes of the Ancestor were filled with malice and a savage desire to kill. "I, Venomfreak, swear that I will definitely kill you. I will definitely kill you!!! Not only will I kill you, I'll also wipe out your clan and all those you care about!"

"Don't worry. I'm planning on killing you too. Hahaha..." Ning raised his

head to stare upwards, his eyes blazing with torch-light. He could clearly see the horned, golden-robed man above him.

Rumble...the copper pillar rose up at an ever-fast pace. The pushing power from below now completely outstripped the power of the forces of the Youngflame clan. With Ning helping out as well, the copper pillar was pulled out faster and faster, with Ning's six arms turning into blurs as they moved.

"Damn it." The Youngflame clan's Ancestor had an extremely ugly look on his face. He immediately sent mentally, "Everyone, halt. Hurry up and establish the Eight Immortals Sea-Subduing Formation!"

"Yes!"

The eight Celestial Immortals Arcanum, Infatuation, Goldclock, Deadwood, Sunfish, Flamefish, Goldcloud, and Blackrain, upon hearing the orders of their incomparably venerated founder, all gave up on their attempts and simultaneously flew high into the sky. Even the three aberrations gave up as well; everyone flew up into the sky.

The eight mighty Celestial Immortals fell into formation, with the horned, golden-robed man standing at the very center and the three aberrations circling around them.

"They're coming." The horned, golden-robed man stared downwards coldly.

Clank. The pillar suddenly stopped moving.

Ning, as well, realized that the copper pillar could no longer be budged. More than 4200 kilometers of it was stretching beyond the fiery stone wall.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

An enormous sound, as though the sky itself was bursting apart or as if the earth itself was shattering.

Ning felt the countless runes covering the fiery stone wall beneath his feet begin to flicker...and the fiery stone wall itself began to move.

Whoosh! Ning sent out his divine sense to investigate. He could now see that a crack had suddenly appeared across the surface of the vast, fiery stone wall. The crack was rapidly increasing in size, expanding to each side.

It was like a crack appearing on the lid to a cauldron or a furnace.

“WE’RE OUT!”

“WE’RE OUT!”

“WE’RE FINALLY OUT!”

One figure after another came soaring out from the crack. The tight, dense waves of figures came flooding out, and as they did they rapidly began to increase in size. They started off as tiny dots, but they began to transform into Fiendgods that were thousands or tens of thousands of meters tall! They all let out agitated, berserk howls, and the sound of their roars shook the world around them. Just from listening to their agitated roars, one could sense the infinite excitement these Fiendgods were feeling.

Their roars alone could shake one’s soul!

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! The earth broke apart. Countless Fiendgods came charging out into the sky. Some of the Fiendgods had two horns and flames coming out of their nostrils, some had the appearance of beastmen, and others appeared just like a mass of black fog...

All sorts of Fiendgods had appeared. Tall, muscular ones, sinister and bizarre ones, savage and berserk ones.

Some were large, some were small, but all of them came charging out from the stone wall, and the earth around them was utterly destroyed.

“This...this is...” Ning was completely stunned.

“This many Fiendgods?! And the auras of these Fiendgods...more than half of them are actually Void-level Fiendgods.” Ning instantly understood why the power that had come from below the copper pillar was so enormously powerful.

There were more than nine hundred Fiendgods before him...and more than sixty percent of them were Void-level Fiendgods!

These were true, real Fiendgods, the type that generally had divine abilities of their own. Over the course of countless ages, their comprehension of the Dao had most likely risen to an incredibly high level as well. Every single Void-level Fiendgod was comparable to a Celestial Immortal, and some of them were probably comparable to supreme Celestial Immortals. For so many Fiendgods to unleash their power at once...what an incredible sight that must have been!

"What in the world has the Youngflame clan done? They imprisoned this many Fiendgods!?" Ning was completely stunned.

The faces of the nine midair Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan were all ugly to behold.

"Damn." The Ancestor's face was ashen.

"If I had known this would happen...I would've killed these Fiendgods long ago."

"Damn this Ji Ning."

"He actually released the Fiendgods of the Infinity Furnace."

All of the Celestial Immortals were extremely enraged.

The nine hundred-plus Fiendgods burst out from the ground, all of them enormous in size. The sky itself seemed to have grown dark as they all turned to stare at the Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan who were hovering in the air. Their eyes were filled with boundless hatred, so thick and dense the hatred seemed to have taken physical form.

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"Not good." The distant Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals within their formations were completely stunned by what they saw. Everyone could sense the hatred these Fiendgods felt for the nine Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan...and they could also tell that more than half of the Fiendgods were Void-level Fiendgods. So many Void-level

Fiendgods...this was utterly terrifying.

Old Demon Windraiser's reacted the fastest. He immediately roared furiously, "Can't you tell that those Fiendgods have gone mad? Quick! Evacuate all of our clansmen here within the Oldjade mountain range. QUICK!"

"Right!"

"Yes."

"Hurry up and evacuate them!" The Loose Immortals all began to panic as they carried this out; they still cared quite deeply about their clansmen.

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"YOUNGFLAME CLAN!"

More than nine hundred Fiendgods were in the air. They stared angrily at the nine great Celestial Immortals, each of them filled with endless amounts of hatred. The leader of them, a humanoid Fiendgod who had nine heads, let out an angry roar. "You have imprisoned us for countless years. Tortured us for countless years! I, along with all of the Fiendgods who were imprisoned within your furnace, hereby swear that we will completely wipe out your entire Youngflame lineage!"

"We shall swear to annihilate the Youngflame lineage!"

"Annihilate the Youngflame lineage!"

"Annihilate!"

"ANNIHILATE!"

Their roars shook the heavens. All of the Youngflame clansmen who were located within the protective formations all had ashen looks on their faces. Unpleasant looks were on the faces of the nine Celestial Immortals as well. They knew very well how much hatred these Fiendgods bore the Youngflame clan; anyone who had been tormented for so many ages would feel boundless hatred!

"Imprisoned and tortured you for countless years?" Of the nine Celestial

Immortals, the Ancestor was the calmest. He laughed coldly, “And who is to blame for that? You can only blame yourselves, you fools, for not accepting your reality! If you were willing to serve our Youngflame clan, not only would you have regained your liberty long ago, you would also be allowed to enjoy countless things.”

“Submit? We Fiendgods war against the heavens and war against the earth; we are the true masters of the universe. How could we possibly submit to you?” The nine-headed Fiendgod roared with anger, and the other Fiendgods let out similarly enraged roars as well.

“Hahaha, the masters of the universe? Haven’t dozens of your fellow Fiendgods ended up submitting to me, after suffering my torments?” The Ancestor roared with laughter. “Masters of the universe Hah! I’m dying of laughter. You are nothing more than a pack of fools who were born when this major world was created.”

“The ones who submitted to you were trash; they are an embarrassment to all Fiendgods. We TRUE Fiendgod warriors would never bow our heads to you!” The nine-headed Fiendgod roared angrily, “Youngflame Freak, you’ve caught us one by one and imprisoned all of us for countless years, but your biggest mistake was not killing us. Now that we are all gathered here together in one place...and we will definitely annihilate your entire Youngflame lineage!”

By now, Ning had also arrived on the surface of the ground. He raised his head up, watching as all of the Fiendgods in the sky swore their oath. From listening to the dialogue between the two sides, he was able to guess at quite a bit..

The nine-headed Fiendgod suddenly lowered his head, looking down towards Ning, who had just emerged on the surface of the ground.

“My good brother, tell me your name!” The nine-headed Fiendgod looked towards Ning; earlier, when they had charged out, they had all seen that it was Ning who had been pulling away at the copper pillar. “You gave us our freedom back. The kindness you have shown us is vaster than the heavens and weightier than the earth. We shall never forget it!”

Chapter 29: The Tenth Stance of the [Three-Foot Sword]

"My name is Ji Ning. Pulling out the copper pillar was nothing more than a minor thing," Ji Ning said.

Ning knew very well that this was no longer the Fiendgod Era; this was the era of the Grand Xia Dynasty, which had unified the world! Struggles between human clans were minor affairs, but any Fiendgod that refused to submit to humans would be pursued and assaulted by all parties! The free Fiendgods would have no choice but to flee in pitiful fashion to the ends of the earth. This was what had happened to that ancient Fiendgod who had been in the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains; he was clearly more powerful than Loose Immortals, and would be able to effortless crush them with his hands...but he didn't dare to fight back at all. He had always been fleeing in a pathetic fashion.

As for submitting?

These nine hundred-plus Fiendgods had been captured and tormented for countless years without being willing to submit to the Youngflame clan; it would most likely be very hard for them to be made to submit to any other human clans.

"We Fiendgods repay benevolence with benevolence, and repay malice with malice," the nine-headed Fiendgod sent mentally, then turned his head to look at the nine Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan. He let out a heaven-shaking roar and said, "Youngflame clan, you've imprisoned and tormented us for countless years. Today, the day of vengeance is at hand! Let us wipe all of them out before the Godslayer Guards of the Xia Emperor arrive!"

"KILL!"

"KILL THEM ALL!"

Murderous roars filled the skies, the roars themselves filled with boundless hatred.

The nine hundred-plus Fiendgods actually formed into a war-formation. Their divine power flowed through them, merging to become a single whole as the blurry illusion of an ancient Fiendgod suddenly appeared in the skies, its entire body wreathed in flames. Its aura was so powerful that even Ning was rather stunned. “So this is a Fiendgod war-formation?” He had only heard of Fiendgod war-formations; this was the first time he had seen one.

Fiendgods were born to be powerful fighters and combatants. They truly did war against the heavens and the earth, preferring to die than to submit.

Daoist Threelives was a classic example; after an enemy ripped out off one of his arms, he actually decided to forever have just a single arm! As many humans saw it, this was utter idiocy...but this was exactly what Daoist Threelives did. This was due to his own pride!

When the ancient tribulation had come, he could've hidden away and retreated; given his level of power, he would've been able to keep himself alive. But...he didn't do this. He knew that things would be extremely dangerous, but he still went forward to welcome the danger. Even in death, he had felt no regrets!

Ning raised his head to look at the awe-inspiring horde of Fiendgods in the skies. They all held weapons at the ready as they charged towards the nine Celestial Immortals.

On one side, a Fiendgod war-formation; on the otherside, the Eight Immortals Sea-Subduing Formation of Immortal cultivators!

BOOM!

A powerful collision could be heard, as though the heavens had broken apart and the earth had collapsed.

A series of massive waves swept past the region surrounding the eight Celestial Immortals, causing the power of the enemy collision to be completely negated. This Eight Immortals Sea-Subduing Formation was one of the most supreme defensive formations of the Three Realms; it focused completely on being flawlessly protective! They knew very well

how difficult it would be to kill these Fiendgods.

"Hahaha, is that all you have?" The Ancestor of the Youngflame clan laughed coldly, "I urge you to hurry up and leave; I've already notified the Xia Emperor, and I trust that he will soon dispatch the Godslayer Guards to come. If you don't leave now...none of you will be leaving at all!"

"Kill."

"KILL!"

The Fiendgods didn't care at all; they continued to charge forward and attack.

BOOM!

The massive, fiery illusion of a Fiendgod that had been formed by their war-formation once more slammed against the Eight Immortals Sea-Subduing Formation. The faces of the Celestial Immortals sustaining the formation all turned ashen.

"Ancestor, what should we do? What are our options?" Celestial Immortal Arcanum sent frantically, "We won't be able to hold for too long; their Fiendgod war-formation is too powerful."

"What can we do?" The horned, golden-robed man gave Celestial Immortal Arcanum a cold look. "There are more than nine hundred Fiendgods here, and more than six hundred of them are Void-level Fiendgods. When they work together, they are capable of shaking the world itself; you won't even be able to use a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal to escape. As for hiding into a mobile Immortal estate, then using the Greater Teleportation Dao-seal? The combined strike from so many Fiendgods will reduce any estate to dust in an instant. You want to run? There's no way to run! There is only one option; buy time! Buy a little bit of time...because once the Godslayer Guards of the Xia Emperor arrive, we'll be rescued!"

Using a Greater Teleportation Dao-seal required time...and one couldn't be disrupted in the process!

"Will the Godslayer Guards of the Xia Emperor make it in time?"

Celestial Immortal Goldclock asked.

"I've already notified the Xia Emperor," the horned, golden-robed man said.

"What if the Godslayer Guard intentionally delays? What then?" Celestial Immortal Arcanum asked worriedly.

The pupils of the horned, golden-robed man shrank, but he said in a low voice, "That won't happen. The Xia Emperor, that old bastard, knows very well that I have a treasure that can protect you and take you all away with me. However, that treasure will shatter after a single use. Unless things become critical, I absolutely won't use it."

A treasure capable of blocking the combined strikes of over nine hundred Fiendgods was equivalent to a second life for a Celestial Immortal; the Youngflame clan's Ancestor wasn't willing to use it if he didn't have to!

.....

"You Fiendgods, you are wasting time. The more time you waste, the more of you shall die later." The horned, golden-robed man sent a mental message through his elemental ki, and his voice echoed throughout the nearby area. "Once the Godslayer Guards arrive...you know exactly how powerful they are. You will be dead!"

"Even if we die, we'll annihilate your Youngflame clan as well!" A Fiendgod covered with scales roared this back at him.

"What's to fear about death? Youngflame clan, all of your Celestial Immortals shall die!"

"Youngflame Freak, I know that you yourself have countless clones, but those eight Celestial Immortals under your command shall all die today!"

The Fiendgods were all roaring as they once more joined their power to charge against the Eight Immortals Sea-Subduing Formation.

"You really are quite bold and daring; you don't even want to live any longer! But such a pity; you've managed to endure for so many years,

managed to endure all sorts of torments, refusing to bow your heads for the sake of one day gaining your freedom...but now that you are free, for the sake of taking your so-called ‘revenge’, you are all going to be caught and slaughtered by the Godslayer Guards. What a true pity! If I were you, I would’ve fled to the ends of the world by now...in fact, I would’ve fled from the entire world of the Grand Xia!” The horned, golden-robed man roared with laughter.

Indeed, a portion of the nine hundred-plus Fiendgods hesitated.

It was true.

Freedom!

To no longer be imprisoned; to no longer be tortured! It was hard to understand how precious freedom was to them. They had waited for this day for far too long. Were they going to give it all up for the sake of vengeance?

“If we don’t kill the Youngflame clan, even if we live, we’ll live with regret. Today, we shall kill the Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan. After we slaughter them all, we’ll joyfully flee!” The nine-headed Fiendgod roared angrily.

“That’s what we want! To live joyfully!”

“Hahaha, Ninehead, I feel as though I’ve returned back to the old days when we warred against the humans. Right! What we want is to live joyfully! What’s so scary about death?”

“Wonderful, wonderful!”

All of them let out heroic roars.

The more powerful a Fiendgod was, the more fearless they would become; the desire to do battle that they were born with caused them to become extraordinarily berserk.

.....

Ji Ning, watching from below, was stunned.

“Fiendgods...?” Ning murmured to himself.

Although he, too, trained as a Fiendgod Body Refiner, he didn't have the heart of a true Fiendgod. He was a human, after all.

If he had been imprisoned and tortured for countless eons...upon escaping and seeing a tremendous threat approaching, he probably would've chosen to flee. Only later would he prepare for revenge! But Fiendgods were different; they weren't willing to wait at all. In their rage, they would take vengeance right away, with no fear of death at all. This sort of desire to do battle stemmed from their very bones; they were born for war. It all completely stunned Ning.

"Kill."

"Kill."

BOOM! Explosions rang out unabated within the skies. The eight Celestial Immortals would occasionally eat a spirit-pill to replenish their elemental ki, striving to defend for as long as they could. The power of the collisions caused even the golden pellet Jindan in their bodies to be damaged. They were only just barely able to hold on, while the Fiendgods were growing increasingly berserk.

Time continued to pass, one second after the other.

None of the Fiendgods, however, departed; they all continued to attack in a berserk manner.

"To be joyful and act as one pleases."

"For a desire for battle to be so powerful as to fill the skies."

"To wipe out all foes."

Ning was mumbling to himself. Suddenly, streaks of sword-ki began to appear around him. Covered by countless streaks of sword-ki, Ning looked like a spirit composed of swords.

Ning closed his eyes.

Threads of enlightenment continuously flowed towards him...

Ever since Ning had truly decided to start his war against the Youngflame clan, his heart had started to become even more clear, and

his desire to do battle had grown.

However, upon seeing the Fiendgods who had been imprisoned and tormented for countless years choose to ignore their freedom in favor of a joyful battle against those they hated, the desire to do battle in Ning's heart began to grow even stronger.

Stronger and stronger, it grew...and his heart became clearer and clearer.

All the insights he had gained in the past began to gather in his mind.

.....

In the skies above, those nine hundred-plus Fiendgods continued to frantically assault the nine Celestial Immortals. The nine Celestial Immortals were only trying to buy time. As for the Ancestor, he was gnashing his teeth. He truly didn't wish to use his supreme protective treasure; in his heart, it was far more important than the lives of one or two of his Celestial Immortals. But if eight Celestial Immortals under his command died...then he truly would become the lone survivor of the clan. He didn't wish for this to happen.

"Wait a little longer. A little longer." The Youngflame clan's Ancestor was frantically encouraging them.

The other eight Celestial Immortals were doing their best to hold on as well. They couldn't break; they had to stay strong.

Rumble...

Suddenly, a ripple of power appeared.

It was the ripple of a Greater Teleportation.

"Mm?" The nine Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan simultaneously raised their heads.

The nine hundred-plus Fiendgods raised their heads as well.

High in the sky, an ancient-looking warship that appeared to be formed from waves of blood. This bloodwave warship was manned by warriors who were dressed in blood-red armor, each of whom had utterly

astonishing auras of power.

“THE GODSLAYER GUARDS!” The nine Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan were overjoyed.

“Let’s leave now!”

“Flee.”

“Scatter!”

The nine hundred Fiendgods could no longer afford to wait around. With a series of booms, they tore through space, using spatial teleports to rapidly flee in every direction.

“Chase after them!” A tall, muscular general who stood upon the deck of the bloodwave warship gave the nine Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan a cold look, then immediately gave the order.

Instantly, with many bloody flashes of light, the Godslayer Guards tore holes through space as well as they engaged in pursuit.

The world became peaceful once more.

The Fiendgods had disappeared.

The Godslayer Guards had disappeared as well.

“Whew.” The nine mighty Celestial Immortals all let out sighs of relief.

“Thank goodness. Thank goodness!” The horned, golden-robed man nodded to himself. “Thank goodness I wasn’t in a rush to use my treasure. Otherwise, it would’ve been wasted.”

“...that Ji Ning actually hasn’t fled!” Celestial Immortal Arcanum pointed downwards, laughing coldly, “Although we are heavily injured, with the three insect aberrations present...we are completely capable of suppressing him.”

All the other Celestial Immortals looked downwards as well, the Ancestor included.

Ning was standing in the midst of some rubble. His eyes were closed, and he even had a hint of a smile on his face. This was the feeling of joy

he had when he was gaining insights into the Dao.

“Where the Dao is...” Ning opened his eyes, then said softly, “Though ten million soldiers bar my path, I shall relentlessly advance!”

BOOM!!!

The rubble around Ning, including the countless pieces of shattered rocks, broken bits of grass, and even drops of water all began to levitate into the air...and as they did, sword-light began to gather around them. It was as though all things had become a sword! Even the many Immortal swords and Darknorth swords that floated in the empty space within Ning’s Zifu region began to emit sword-hums.

“Although I am very talented, and although my insights into the Dao have long ago surpassed that of senior Northwalker...in terms of my sword-heart, perhaps only today have I just barely reached his level.”

Ning could feel a surge of sword-intent that wished to burst forth from within his heart. This sword-intent was so powerful, so resonant.

“Where the Dao is...”

“Where the Dao is...”

Ning murmured softly to himself, “This new sword-art that I just developed...let it be named the ‘Relentless Advance’, then.”

The tenth stance of the [Three-Foot Sword] – Relentless Advance!

Ning raised his head to look towards the sky. The sky was now devoid of Fiendgods...only the nine Celestial Immortals and the three aberrations were still present.

Chapter 30: The Sword Eradicates Celestial Immortals

There were some Loose Immortals who were gathering within the protective formations far away.

"Windraiser, I've already moved all of the mortals and Immortal cultivators in the area under my control into this Qiankun pearl." A green-haired Immortal lifted up a black pearl that glowed with soft light. He then waved his hand and put it away. Looking towards the outside, he said with a chortle, "But from the looks of it, I didn't need to evacuate them at all; the Fiendgods have all left, leaving behind just Ji Ning."

"Indeed." Windraiser smiled and nodded as well.

They had been evacuating many of their clansmen because they had been afraid of those nine hundred-plus Fiendgods.

Now that the Fiendgods were being pursued by the Godslayer Guards of the Xia Emperor...the only enemy left was Ji Ning.

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"Master, Master! Aren't you going to flee?" Little Qing, within the ten thousand kilometer formation region, was absolutely frantic. "Not even nine hundred-plus Fiendgods were able to break through the defenses of those eight Celestial Immortals. What's the point of staying there by yourself? Quick, flee!"

"Senior apprentice-brother!" Northson was very worried as well.

"Don't panic. My boy Ning isn't the rash sort." Uncle White stared off into the distance. In the heart, he murmured, "Ning, son, be careful."

.....

The nine Celestial Immortals in the air now felt far more confidence than they had earlier. The Ancestor of the Youngflame clan said, "Earlier, you all suffered attacks from those Fiendgods; your wounds are all significant. It's best if you join into a formation to provide assistance to

me...and leave Ji Ning to me. Just assist me.”

“Alright.”

“Although we are injured, we’re still able to use thirty to forty percent of our power. The power of the eight of us, joined forces, is still significant. Against Ji Ning, there’s no need to use the ‘Eight Immortals Sea-Subduing Formation’. It’s better if we use the ‘Eight Trigrams Roving Dragon Formation’,” Celestial Immortal Goldclock said with great confidence.

“Mm.”

“Alright.”

“The Eight Trigrams Roving Dragon Formation is more than enough to block Ji Ning’s attacks.” Even the most careful of them all, Celestial Infatuation, nodded in agreement.

Different formations naturally had different levels of power.

The Eight Immortals Sea-Subduing Formation was completely focused on defense; it didn’t have any offensive techniques at all, naturally resulting in an extremely powerful defense.

The Eight Trigrams Roving Dragon Formation was fairly balanced; its attacks and defenses were even. After all, the Celestial Immortals now knew how strong Ning was; they didn’t need to waste too much of their energy on unnecessary defense.

Previously, they had faced nine hundred-plus Fiendgods, with roughly six hundred being Void-level Fiendgods. In truth, Void-level Fiendgods were generally on par with the likes of Immortal Northwalker in power; that Void-level Fiendgod which Ning had encountered in the wild marshes of the Gaol Mountains had once suffered Immortal Northwalker’s wrath. Although Void-level Fiendgods had divine abilities to add to their power, allowing them to become comparable to Celestial Immortals...their ability to comprehend of the Dao was simply too low. Once they reached a bottleneck, they might spend a trillion years at that bottleneck without advancing at all.

Even Mount Innerheart had quite a few Fiendgods who remained unable

to beat the ninth golem.

Their inferiority in comprehending the Dao were their greatest weakness!

And so, while there were six hundred Void-level Fiendgods...even Patriarch Arcanum who was the weakest of the eight Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan was far more powerful than the likes of Immortal Northwalker, a Loose Immortal who lived for a million years! As for Celestial Immortals Goldclock, Deadwood, and Flamefish, they were even more powerful. Celestial Immortal Infatuation, in turn, belonged to the supreme tier.

Thus...it took roughly ten or so of the Void-level Fiendgods to match a single one of the Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan.

That great gathering of Fiendgods, in turn, was just comparable to thirty or fifty Celestial Immortals of the Youngflame clan.

When eight Celestial Immortals completely focused on defense, they would generally be able to hold off against a group of thirty to fifty Celestial Immortals for a short period of time. However, those Fiendgods had been too berserk; although the battle had been very brief, they had still managed to heavily injure all eight of the Celestial Immortals, causing even their golden pellet Jindans to be seriously damaged. They would all require many spirit-pills, medicines, and time to slowly repair the damage done. Now that they were going to deal with Ji Ning while heavily injured...the weakest of them, Celestial Immortal Arcanum, was only able to use perhaps ten to twenty percent of his full power, while the mighty Celestial Immortal Infatuation was still able to use fifty to sixty percent. As a whole, the eight Celestial Immortals were at roughly thirty to forty percent of their full power.

Rumble...

The Eight Trigrams Roving Dragon Formation took form.

Instantly, an enormous golden set of eight trigram symbols appeared. The eight mighty Celestial Immortals were the ‘points’ at which the eight trigrams were located. Around them coiled a golden, roving dragon that

hovered in midair.

The eight Celestial Immortals all stared downwards.

“Goldclock, once we trap Ji Ning, you’ll absorb him into your golden greatclock,” the horned, golden-robed man sent through his divine power. A smile was on his face, and he was extraordinarily confident right now.

“Yes, Ancestor!” Celestial Immortal Goldclock was extremely excited; they had been under tremendous pressure when facing so many Fiendgods, but against this single person, Ji Ning...in addition, given that they had already battled against Ning within the trapping formation earlier, they knew how strong he was. This just made them even more confident of their chances.

On the ground below.

The sword-intent surging forth from Ning’s heart was continuously growing in strength. Ning raised his head to look towards the sky. There were nine mighty Celestial Immortals in the sky. The ugly, horned, golden-robed figure produced a horsetail whisk, and before him stood three enormous insect aberrations. As for the other eight Celestial Immortals, they were in some sort of Eight Trigrams formation next to him.

“The eight Celestial Immortals came under a wild assault from those nine hundred-plus Fiendgods just now...clearly, they were only just barely able to hold on. They are probably all heavily injured, but they actually aren’t retreating and are facing me. They probably don’t hold my strength in any regard.” After pondering for a moment, Ning immediately knew what his foes were thinking.

However...Ning wasn’t like those Void-level Fiendgods!

His special divine ability was something more powerful than the likes of the other divine abilities which most Empyrean Gods or True Gods of Primal Chaos could come up with. It was the [Starseizing Hand], the supreme divine ability which Daoist Threelives had once used to roam and dominate the Primordial Era. The escaped Void-level Fiendgods had all been born during the creation of this major world of the Grand Xia; by

comparison, their divine abilities were much weaker.

Ning's palms, in turn were akin to supreme Pure Yang treasures.

As for his insights into the Dao...he used to be on par with Patriarch Goldclock, but he had now completely surpassed him, reaching a new, higher level.

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"Everyone, be careful. This Ji Ning is no ordinary Fiendgod; he is a supremely talented monster with a very high level of sword-arts. He was previously able to crush the five of us, and now, although we eight have joined forces, we are only able to use a portion of our strength. We must be careful. Let the Ancestor serve as our main attacker, while we shall serve merely as support," Celestial Immortal Infatuation warned.

"Don't worry, Infatuation. When the five of us previously used the Five Elements Mountainhold Formation, we were able to easily block his attacks. Now that the eight of us have joined into the Eight Trigrams Roving Dragon Formation...even though we are only at thirty or forty percent power, our strength is quite close to the level of power which a full strength Five Elements Mountainhold Formation has. We'll absolutely be able to block him," Celestial Immortal Goldclock said confidently.

"Kill!" The horned, golden-robed man immediately gave the order.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Instantly, the three enormous aberrations all charged downwards.

BOOM! Ning, who had originally been standing on the ground, suddenly charged into the skies, moving like a streak of light.

By comparison, Ning was like a tiny little dot that was rising, while the three enormous insectoid aberrations came charging down from above.

"[Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens]!"

Whoosh! A gust of wind blew past. Ning, moving at a speed that rendered the Youngflame clan completely speechless, was actually able to

move past all three of the aberrations. This was an evasive divine ability which Patriarch Subhuti had specially designed for Ji Ning. Although it could only be considered a top-class divine ability of the Three Realms, and couldn't compare to supreme evasive techniques like the [Wings of the Garuda], Ning actually wouldn't have been as fast when using the [Wings of Garurda]. After all...Ning himself wasn't a golden-winged Roc; he was a human. It would be impressive for humans to be able to use even thirty to fifty percent of a divine ability designed for birds.

"Too fast." The horned, golden-robed man was surprised by this.

"Stop him."

"Everyone, be careful." The eight Celestial Immortals saw that as Ning used his evasive divine ability, he was making his way towards them.

"Tie him down while I use my insectoid aberrations to attack him," the horned, golden-robed man said hurriedly. He had to tie down Ning. Otherwise, given Ning's speed...there was no way those insects could catch up to him at all. Once they actually got into battle, his insectoid aberrations were more than powerful enough to keep Ning completely occupied, making it impossible for him to dodge. They would draw him into the divine greatclock!

It must be understood that of the three insectoid aberrations, the winged rhinoceros creature alone was, in terms of strength, comparable to Ning at full power. It was precisely due to creatures like this that Immortal Venomfreak was able to become so famous within the Three Realms; these aberrations definitely couldn't be underestimated.

Whoosh.

The [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens] blew forth, and Ning arrived in front of the eight Celestial Immortals.

"Kill!" The eight Celestial Immortals stared towards Ning from afar. The giant golden dragon that had been coiled around them let out an earth-shattering draconic roar and charged straight towards Ning.

Ning's gaze was as deep and fathomless as the depths of the sea. His six

arms instantly appeared, and the fingers of those six enormous hands, glowing with golden light, simultaneously formed into a set of sword-fingers, unleashing techniques that represented the most powerful sword-arts which Ning had created thus far. Although in terms of profoundness, some of the other sword-arts Ning had learned in the past were comparable to this stance he had created...his own stance was the stance that was most appropriate for him. Only the creator of a technique would be able to truly unleash its full, maximum power.

Ning's sword-fingers all became three hundred meters long!

Enormous sword-fingers...like the fingers of a divinity.

At the same time, in front of the sword-fingers appeared divine black swords that was fully three thousand meters in length!

As far as the eye could see...

There were six entire divine black swords that were over three thousand meters long, gathering the power of heaven and earth within them. One of the divine black swords chopped directly against the body of the golden dragon, causing it to shudder and turn dim. The golden dragon roared as well, furiously striving to resist the sword...but the five of the other enormous swords stabbed straight towards the Eight Trigrams Roving Dragon Formation.

BOOM! The golden Eight Trigrams symbols trembled, and then with a booming sound completely blew apart.

"No!"

"What?!"

The eight Celestial Immortals were all stunned.

"Not good." The horned, golden-robed man wasn't too far from them. Shocked, he hurriedly stretched out the horsetail whisk in his hand...but alas, distant water is unable to quench thirst.

Ji Ning's attack speed was extremely fast!

As Ning's five sword-fingers, in the form of five divine black swords,

stabbed through the Eight Trigrams Roving Dragon Formation, two of the swords turned to pierce towards the closest Celestial Immortal, Goldclock. Goldclock was utterly terrified; he wasn't able to flee at all, and so all he could do was immediately unleash his most powerful treasure, the top-grade Pure Yang divine greatclock. Ignoring the wounds which his golden pellet Jindan had suffered, he immediately and frantically began to squeeze every last drop out of it, struggling to increase his power as much as he could.

BOOM! The divine greatclock was sent flying from the strike of the first divine black sword. As for the second divine black sword, it slashed across Celestial Immortal Goldclock's body...which was promptly reduced to ash by what seemed like an endless torrent of sword-ki.

The golden palm that had launched the divine black sword that had sent the golden greatclock flying away swung out, grabbing the now-ownerless greatclock.

BOOM! Two other streaks of black sword-light were flying towards the other nearby Celestial Immortal, Flamefish. Although Celestial Immortal Flamefish also frantically sought to squeeze as much power from his Jindan as he could...Ning, even back when he had first trained in the [Starseizing Hand], was already comparable to Celestial Immortal Infatuation. Now that he had developed an even more powerful sword technique, he was clearly much more powerful than before. In addition, his sword-fingers were akin to a supreme Pure Yang treasure; how could the likes of Celestial Immortal Flamefish possibly withstand him?

The two streaks of sword-light flashed past, and Celestial Immortal Flamefish was reduced to dust as well.

Clang!

Clang!

The other six Celestial Immortals went absolutely all out, finally managing to block the last streak of sword-light Ning had sent out.

This initial strike by Ning had claimed the lives of two out of eight Celestial immortals!

"DAMN HIM!" The distant Ancestor of the Youngflame clan's eyes turned so wide, his eyelids threatened to split apart. His eyes were now completely bloodshot.

Chapter 31: The Evacuated Youngflame Clansmen

The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals of the Youngflame clan who were hiding behind their formations had previously felt quite relaxed; some of them had already stopped evacuating the mortals in the areas they were responsible for. When they had seen the nine hundred-plus Fiendgods attack, they had been quite worried...but upon seeing only Ji Ning remained, they felt quite relaxed.

But...

"How...how can this be? How could he have broken through a formation of eight Celestial Immortals?"

"Didn't five of our Celestial Immortals battle Ji Ning within that formation of his? Now that they know exactly how powerful he is...how could they have made a mistake on this level?"

"Good heavens!"

The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals were completely dazed.

Celestial Immortals had incomparably exalted statuses...and two had just died now, all of a sudden. And they were Celestial Immortals who had belonged to the Youngflame clan!

"Quick, hurry up and re-launch the evacuation process," Old Demon Windraiser sent mentally with a furious roar. "This Ji Ning has a body as tough as a magic treasure; he doesn't fear the attacks of Celestial Immortals. If the Celestial Immortals of our Youngflame clan are unable to do anything to him...he might start massacring us soon!"

"Right, right, right!"

"Keep evacuation."

"Quickly!"

The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals who had yet to completely evacuate the mortals and cultivators in their regions once more began to

quickly do so.

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"Wooooooooow!" Little Qing's eyes bulged out. She looked as though she had seen a ghost. "Two Celestial Immortals...Celestial Immortals! Those were Celestial Immortals who had escaped the confines of the Three Realms after overcoming their Celestial Tribulations! They were far, far more precious and venerable than Void-level Fiendgods. Celestial Immortals are so powerful and mighty, but...but two of them just died?!"

Mu Northson was speechless as well.

The nearby Uncle White was even more stunned. A Celestial Immortal! Each served as the foundations for a truly supreme clan. It was rare for a single one to be produced in the Grand Xia Dynasty in a million years... and two of them had just died like that?

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Ning stared at a distant flying shuttle. The flying shuttle was completely black, and was roughly three hundred meters long. Just now, all six of the surviving Celestial Immortals had flown over and hidden themselves within the flying shuttle; only the horned, golden-robed man remained outside the shuttle, standing atop it and staring towards Ning.

"They ran pretty fast," Ning mumbled to himself.

He had suddenly killed two Celestial Immortals earlier, causing the remaining six Celestial Immortals to immediately flee into that shuttle. In fact, after they did so, they had completely sealed off all openings to the flying shuttle, giving him no chance to attack them at all.

"How can this be?!" The enraged Ancestor glared coldly at Ning from his position atop the shuttle. He sent an angry mental howl, "Infatuation, didn't you say earlier that the eight of you combined were more than enough to stop him? Didn't you say that even though his power suddenly increased significantly after your last ambush, that he's still just roughly on par with you?"

"We didn't know either!"

“When we were hiding at Mu Northson’s place and ambushed him...he truly was quite weak, even weaker than Goldclock and Deadwood.”

“Right, right! That really was the case. And just a short while ago...the five of us fought against him within his formations. We were quite surprised at how much his power had increased in merely half a month; he was now close to Infatuation in power. But now, in the blink of an eye, his power has increased even more?! He’s even stronger than Infatuation now!”

“The amount of time that passed since our battle was roughly as much as needed to boil a kettle of tea. How could he have grown so much stronger?!”

“It’s not that we were overconfident; it’s that all of this is simply inconceivable!”

Celestial Immortals Infatuation, Deadwood, and Sunfish all felt quite miserable as well.

They clearly had fought Ning just a short while ago...but after he had released those nine hundred-plus Fiendgods, he had grown even more powerful. This rate of increase in strength was simply too fast! Generally speaking, the higher one’s level was, the slower one would increase in strength. It was one thing for Ning to increase so rapidly in power after being ambushed, but for him to suddenly increase in strength yet again in the blink of an eye?

“Damn, damn!” The horned, golden-robed ground his teeth. Any cultivator who was able to train to the Celestial Immortal level would be extremely cautious; if they couldn’t win a fight, they would flee. But this time, they truly had been overconfident, primarily because they had already fought against Ning and knew exactly how strong he was! This single instance of overconfidence had cost them two lives.

They had gone all out to fight against the nine hundred-plus Fiendgods. They had survived.

Against Ji Ning, they had been overconfident...and ended up losing two of their ranks.

"All of you are wounded; you are not to interfere in this fight against Ji Ning. Leave it all to me," the horned, golden-robed man sent.

"Yes, Master."

"Yes, Patriarch."

They all acknowledged the command.

The horned, golden-robed man stared towards the distant Ning, then roared angrily, "Ji Ning, you've slain two Celestial Immortals of my Youngflame clan. I shall not live under the same skies with you! I shall kill you. KILL YOU!"

"...Earlier, when I was pulling out the copper pillar, didn't you already swear an oath that you were going to wipe me out, along with my clan and my friends? You know, you only need to say nasty words like these a single time. I've already memorized them quite firmly. Don't worry... killing two of your Celestial Immortals was just the start. I'm going to wipe out all of the Celestial Immortals of your Youngflame clan, as well as all of your Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals. As for your other cultivators and mortals...I trust I won't even need to act against them. There will be plenty of other major clans that will come to annihilate you," Ning said.

As the saying goes, a wall falls when many hands push on it. There were many others who had feuds with the Youngflame clan, such as the Kindwater clan, which was even stronger than the Youngflame clan.

And even for those who didn't have a feud with the Youngflame clan... given that the Youngflame clan took up three major commanderies, each of which was far larger than Stillwater Commandery...there were naturally many others who were envious of their territory. Once all their Celestial Immortals died, the cultivators and commoners of the Youngflame clan would be doomed! They would be effortlessly swept aside.

"All by yourself? I, Youngflame Freak, have roamed the universe since the Primordial Era, but no one has ever dared to claim they can kill me." A savage light flashed through the eyes of the horned, golden-robed man.

“Have a taste of what my children can do, first!”

The three enormous insectoid aberrations flew towards Ning, blotting out the sun with their size. Their auras were extraordinary in power as they came rushing towards Ning.

Ning stood there in midair, a tiny little dot by comparison, but one with three heads and six arms. His arms swept through the air as his golden fingers formed into sword-fingers, transforming into divine black swords that were more than three thousand meters in length...

His terrifying sword-intent radiated outwards. Anyone could sense the resolve contained within it, and just by looking at it, one could feel as though no one could possibly withstand his sword.

Slash! A large wound appeared on the body of the black viper aberration, but the wound quickly began to recover, completely healing in the blink of an eye.

Crunch! The winged rhinoceros-aberration had incomparably tough skin, but Ning was still able to punch a hole through it. Still, the winged rhinoceros kicked Ning's palm aside, and the hole in its flank quickly regenerated.

The armored insectoid aberration had even more powerful defense, and Ning was just barely able to leave a wound behind on its body.

“What a nasty little pest.” Ning was secretly startled by this first exchange of blows. “All three of these aberrations are this powerful?”

In terms of their comprehension of the Dao, the three insectoid aberrations were vastly inferior to him.

But their physical strength and close combat power was simply too great.

Each of them had extremely durable physical forms; even their thick skin and armored carapaces were comparable to Heaven-ranked magic treasures. The flesh within their body was extremely sturdy as well, and for every inch of flesh Ning penetrated, he felt an extremely powerful force resisting him. And even if he did manage to injure them...they would

be able to heal in a very short period of time! They were also enormously strong; the black viper and the armored insect were nearly half as strong as Ning when Ning used the Fourth Cycle of the [Starseizing Hand] and [Three Heads, Six Arms], while the winged rhinoceros was comparable to Ning's full power!

"Activate!" The distant horned, golden-robed man watched coldly, then let out a soft bark. Instantly, the back of the armored insect began to release large numbers of divine tattoos. These divine tattoos flickered and flashed, causing the armored insect to rapidly shrink in size, while beginning to split apart. By the time it shrank to three thousand meters, it completely split apart to become a pair of the armored insects. By the time it shrank down to three hundred meters, it had split apart to become four armored insects. And by the time it shrank down to thirty meters... there were eight of those armored insects.

"ROAAAAR!" The winged rhinoceros let out a furious roar, its four powerful leg-trunks beginning to merge with its main body. From the center of its body, a single leg-trunk that was even thicker and longer began to rapidly grow out.

The four-legged winged rhinoceros had actually transformed into a single-legged rhinoceros.

"Hisssss." The black viper's serpentine head suddenly bit down upon its tail. Instantly, its entire body began to glow with divine tattoos. Its scales were rapidly changing, becoming even finer and longer while also beginning to glow with a golden light.

"Die." The horned, golden-robed man had just revealed one of his favorite, consummate tricks.

Ning suddenly transformed into the [Obscuring Wind of the Nine Heavens], surging straight towards the winged rhinoceros.

"KILL!" Ning was charging forward like a brutish Fiendgod, his six massive arms wildly assaulting the winged rhinoceros in close combat!

Clang clang clang...the eight armored insects all struck towards Ning, but Ning completely ignored them. The only result was a series of

clanging sounds that could be heard from Ning's body.

Whoosh! The black viper, now in circular form, swirled towards Ning, seeking to entangle him.

Ning swept out with two of his palms, which struck out like two streaks of sword-light. In terms of the Dao, how could the viper possibly compare to Ning? He was struck head-on and knocked flying away by Ning's sword-light.

"This brat..." The horned, golden-robed man's eyes flashed with cold light.

His armored insect had been completely nullified by Ning. He had been hoping that Ning would be too arrogant and allow the viper to coil around him. Once it did...no matter how strong he was, he would find it difficult to escape. But Ning didn't give the viper any chance at all to draw near him!

"Kill!"

"Die for me!"

Ning and the winged rhinoceros were battling wildly against each other. Ning was completely unwounded, while large amounts of flesh and blood were being sheared off from the winged rhinoceros, under the repeated blows of Ning's knife-sharp palms. Finally, with a furious roar from Ning, the head of the winged rhinoceros was chopped off.

"What should I do? What should I do? What the hell should I do?" The horned, golden-robed man felt a sense of powerlessness in his heart, as well as...hesitation!

"Should I have other clones come over here as well?"

He had other insectoid aberrations!

If all of the insectoid aberrations he commanded were all to gather here, he would be able to completely overwhelm and crush Ji Ning.

"No. I can't let all of my clones appear in one place; that will cause me to risk true death." The horned, golden-robed man knew very well that

due to his insidiousness and viciousness, he had many enemies spread throughout the Three Realms. For example, the Empyrean God of the Kindwater clan had a very powerful desire to kill him. However, because his many clones were all scattered throughout the realms, the Empyrean God was hesitant to make a move, and so had not truly acted to launch a war to wipe out the Youngflame clan.

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Ning, by relying on the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], was even more berserk in his attacks than the three insectoid aberrations. After he forcibly ripped off the head of the winged rhinoceros, the skeleton of the winged rhinoceros flew back towards the horned, golden-robed man. It transformed back into a winged rhinoceros, but one which was only three thousand meters in length, then flew back into the mouth of the horned, golden-robed man.

“TEAR APART!” Ning’s six arms now began to wildly assault the black viper. Two of his arms moved to chop a wound in the body of the black viper, while the other four arms grabbed onto it and gave a vicious tug in two opposite directions.

Riiiiiiip.

The black viper was forcibly torn apart, its black, foul-smelling bloody spraying everywhere.

Ning was fighting even more savagely than he usually did. The three insectoid aberrations, in the face of his fury, were at a complete disadvantage.

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“What should we do?”

“Can it be that our Youngflame clan cannot resist this Ji Ning?”

“This Ji Ning is too terrifying!”

The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals who were hiding behind their formations were filled with terror at what they were seeing.

"Windraiser, all of the mortals within the protective formations have been evacuated. Even if Ji Ning breaks the formations, he can forget about harming our clansmen." The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals viewed Old Demon Windraiser as their leader; in the Oldjade mountain range, Old Demon Windraiser had an extremely high status.

Old Demon Windraiser nodded. "Give me your Qiankun pearls."

"Alright." The Loose Immortals and Earth Immortals all handed over their Qiankun pearls.

Qiankun pearls were residence-type magic treasures! Generally speaking, Celestial Immortals who had a very solid grasp of the Dao of Qiankun would be able to establish a small dimension within a Qiankun pearl. In truth, these were very common treasures, similar to sacks and bags that had private dimensions within them, except these were used to collect and hold people! The space within a Qiankun pearl wasn't that small, being over ten thousand kilometers, but there were no resources within them; there was no way life could be supported within them long-term. They could only be used to temporarily hold living creatures.

And so, they were perfectly suited for moving or evacuating populations.

"Right." Old Demon Windraiser accepted all of the Qiankun pearls.

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"Damn." The horned, golden-robed man was utterly enraged by what he saw, but he was unable to do anything to Ning.

Ning wildly assaulted the black viper, but even after ripping it apart, the black viper merely transformed into two smaller vipers. Still...its aura had noticeably weakened, and Ning continued his assault against it.

Suddenly...a spatial ripple appeared. It was Greater Teleportation.

"Eh?!" Ning turned, only to see that Old Demon Windraiser had appeared in the distance.

"Old Demon Windraiser didn't die?" Ning was startled.

"Windraiser, don't go crazy!"

“Windraiser, go back!”

Celestial Immortals Arcanum, Infatuation, and the others were using their coresense to watch the battle. Upon seeing Old Demon Windraiser appear, they all hurriedly sent mental messages, calling out to him.

“He killed my disciple and destroyed my true body. I cannot live under the same heavens as him!” Old Demon Windraiser suddenly waved his hand, causing a dense cluster of hundreds of spots of starlight to appear. The air above him was also filled with the enormous illusion of the Solar Star, and all these things flew straight towards Ning.

Ning was cold and uncaring. “You, Old Demon, had a Primaltwin? I didn’t go kill you, but you came to throw your life away.”

How could Ning possibly hold Old Demon Windraiser in any regard? He immediately swept out with his own palm to attack. His golden palm smashed apart everything that came before him. Bang! Bang! Bang! The hundreds of miniature stars were instantly knocked flying away.

Crack!

A very peculiar sound rang out.

It was like...an egg cracking.

But those hundreds of star-grains were a set of Immortal-ranked magic treasures; how could Ning have shattered Immortal-ranked magic treasures with a single palm?

“AHHHHHH!!!”

“NOOO!”

“NOOOOO!”

Countless miserable screams rang out.

Within a special region. Countless mortals and cultivators were all squeezed together. These were the evacuated cultivators and mortals...but this region was beginning to crumble and break apart. Although this was merely a small pocket dimension...with the dimensional walls crumbling, how could mortals possibly survive? All of them were ground apart and

killed. Only some of the more powerful cultivators were able to survive.

A few people suddenly appeared in the region before Ning's giant golden palm. These were the Immortal cultivators who had survived the collapse of that pocket dimension...but the power of Ning's earlier blow was simply too great. Even the mere aftershock from his blow was enough to cause these newly emerged Immortal cultivators to be instantly blown into dust.

Infinite despair...despair that filled the skies...it all swept towards Ning.

Infinite resentment!

Infinite hate!

"No...I don't want to die!"

"Oh gods..."

"Who...who..."

"Who killed us?!"

Countless voices rang out in Ning's mind, assailing his heart.

"Ahahahaha!" The distant Old Demon Windraiser was absolutely berserk in his laughter. "You've killed ten billion mortals...what a sinner...what a tremendous sinner!!!"

Rumble...

Rumble...

The skies instantly turned blood red, so red that it was utterly terrifying to behold, so densely red that it caused everyone's heart to tremble. The terrifying redness appeared out of nowhere, and it appeared simultaneously in the skies above Ji Ning and Old Demon Windraiser. These were the legendary...karmic sinflames!

The two clouds of bloody red karmic sinflames reflected and resonated with each other.

The karmic sinflames...descended!

Chapter 32: I'll Send You On Your Way

The red karmic sinflames were terrifying to behold...but they also had a strange, holy aura about them.

They existed purely for the sake of burning away all sin!

"AHHHH!"

In midair, Ji Ning's eyes turned completely red. He frantically clutched at his head as he fell down from the skies.

Within the Still Room of the underwater estate.

The black-robed Primaltwin Ning had originally been seated in the lotus position atop the netherwater jade bed, but his body was now blazing with red karmic sinflames as well. The black-robed Primaltwin Ning was now kneeling on the netherwater jade bed, letting out howls of utter agony and misery. He crawled forward in utter pain, falling down from the bed.

"No...no..." The black-robed Primaltwin Ning let out an agonized howl.

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In the outside world, Ning fell down from the skies. As he fell, he clutched at his head, letting out terrifying, frenzied, throat-tearing howls.

"He didn't die?" The Ancestor of the Youngflame clan was extremely shocked. The other six Celestial Immortals had joined him outside, atop the flying shuttle. They, too, looked with shock and delight upon this scene. They said in amazement, "He actually didn't instantly die from burning?"

"Ahahaha..."

The distant Old Demon Windraiser continued to hover in midair. Surrounded by karmic sinflames, he actually let out laughter that caused one's heart to shudder. His face was utterly contorted, and his eyes were blood-red. Pain wracked every single cell of his body, but he continued to laugh wildly. "It really is...really is...even more fun...than the million-year

Three Calamities, Nine Tribulations...ahahaha...ahahahaha!!!”

Old Demon Windraiser was filled with the agony of being burned by karmic sinflames as well.

“Windraiser’s Dao-heart is no weaker than my own,” Celestial Immortal Infatuation said. “For even him to be in such agony...it’s utterly inconceivable for this Ji Ning, who has trained for less than a century, to actually stay alive and not perish instantly from the descent of karmic sinflames.”

“Right. He’s trained for less than a century, but his Dao-heart is actually this strong...”

“When karmic sinflames descend, they shall unleash multiple layers of punishment. This is but the start.” The Ancestor of the Youngflame clan said in a low voice, “I refuse to believe Ji Ning will be able to survive it.”

Karmic sinflames...

They were the holy flames that burned away sin. They represented the utmost limits of sin.

These flames were the flames of the void, flames that burned away at the soul, at the heart!

They actually weren’t that harmful to the physical body; after all, the heavens always gave one at least a slight chance for survival. If karmic sinflames were to burn away at the body as well, then Fiendgod sinners would have too much of an unfair advantage compared to Ki Refiner sinners.

But although it didn’t harm the body that much...it was utterly terrifying in turns of the damage it did when burning the soul! Even someone like Ning, who had trained in the [Eight-Nine Arcane Art], had no advantages whatsoever in facing these karmic sinflames...

When facing karmic sinflames, all cultivators were treated absolutely equally. The only test right now was of one’s Dao-heart. Would one’s Dao-heart be able to survive while being incinerated by karmic sinflames?

Once one's Dao-heart crumbled, the soul would be unprotected and would be instantly burnt to ashes and dissipated.

Luckily enough, Ning had just come up with the tenth stance of the [Three-Foot Sword]. His Dao-heart now contained the resolve that was embodied in the lines, 'Where the Dao is, though ten million soldiers bar my path, I shall relentlessly advance!' This allowed Ning's Dao-heart to survive the first round of punishment unleashed by the karmic sinflames; 'Agony'.

"He actually...hasn't...hasn't died...what a monster!" Old Demon Windraiser's entire body was wracked by pain as he stared downwards at the fallen Ji Ning.

Old Demon Windraiser's Dao-heart was extremely strong.

He had already lived for a million years. Three Calamities, Nine Tribulations...every three hundred years, a calamity; every nine hundred years, a tribulation. He had endured countless cycles of the Three Calamities, Nine Tribulations over the past million years. Under this sort of constant pressure, his Dao-heart had actually transformed and grown incredibly powerful, with the result being that he had found even the Three Calamities, Nine Tribulations at the million-year mark to be quite easy to overcome.

Clearly, his Dao-heart was far more powerful than Immortal Northwalker's had been. It was comparable to that of many Celestial Immortals...and even amongst Celestial Immortals, he would probably be ranked at the very top.

Although the first round of punishment brought by karmic sinflames, 'Agony', was extremely painful...he was still able to maintain consciousness. He was even able to open his mouth and speak, albeit haltingly; clearly, he was far more powerful than Ning in this regard.

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"What?!"

Within their ten thousand kilometer formation, the Whitewater Hound,

Little Qing, and Mu Northson were completely stunned.

They stared at the blood-red skies, as well as the blood-red karmic sinflames that had appeared around Ning's body. Upon seeing the karmic sinflames appear...they all immediately were able to guess at what had happened. They watched as Ning had let out an agonized, frenzied scream, then collapse from the skies...and their hearts became filled with despair.

"Karmic sinflames...how could Master have caused karmic sinflames to descend?!" Little Qing was utterly horrified.

"How could...senior apprentice-brother...senior apprentice-brother Ji Ning..." Northson was so frantic, he was shaking. "It's all because of me...because of me...no...don't..."

The Whitewater Hound stared at Ning, who had fallen down from the skies. Watching the karmic sinflames roast Ning, Uncle White's tears instantly began to streak down his face. "Ning, son...son..."

Despair!

They were all Immortal cultivators; they knew how terrifying karmic sinflames were, as well as the fact that when they descended, nobody could help out at all. To survive the descent of karmic sinflames was simply far, far too difficult; only truly powerful figures with incomparably mighty Dao-hearts would be able to survive.

But Ning had only trained for less than a century! Although he was publicly acclaimed for having a firm Dao-heart, having a strong sword-heart, and being a born Sword Immortal...he simply hadn't trained for long enough.

The punishment brought by karmic sinflames would come in repeated waves that only increased in power and terror.

"Ning, son, you have to endure it...you have to." The Whitewater Hound stared towards Ning. "I promised Big Brother to take care of you, to always protect you."

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Atop the flying shuttle. The Ancestor of the Youngflame clan and his six mighty Celestial Immortals were also watching the fallen Ji Ning.

"He actually didn't die right away from the descent of karmic sinflames." Patriarch Arcanum said hurriedly, "Ancestor, the punishment brought by karmic sinflames will grow increasingly powerful...but to prevent a miracle from happening which results in this punk surviving, let's suppress him right away. He's completely unable to fight back right now; this is the perfect time to trap and suppress him."

"Right." Celestial Immortal Infatuation nodded as well. "Although I don't believe Ji Ning will survive, if by some miracle he does survive...it's best to suppress him now."

"Supress him."

"It's a shame that Goldclock died, and his divine greatclock was stolen by Ji Ning as well."

"I naturally have other suppressive treasures. Although they aren't comparable to the divine greatclock, one is still a middle-grade Pure Yang treasure; there's no way he can escape." The Youngflame Ancestor suddenly waved his hands, producing a pair of copper cymbals. He threw them out, and the pair instantly expanded in size, transforming into copper cymbals that were more than three hundred meters long.

The copper cymbals split apart, one flying to be above Ji Ning while the other flew underneath him. Once the pair of copper cymbals came together once more...there would be no way for him to escape.

Ning's eyes were completely red, and his face was completely distorted with agony. He couldn't help but let out roars of agony...

...but his Dao-heart hadn't dissipated yet!

He still maintained a single thread of consciousness. He could see what was going on in the outside world, but everything he saw was twisted and blurry. This was because his eyes were too bloodshot right now; if they were just a bit more bloodshot, he would probably be completely blind! When these two giant copper cymbals came to surround him, Ning

immediately struck out with his two arms. Bang! Bang! He instantly knocked the two copper cymbals flying.

"He's actually still able to pay attention to the outside world?" The Ancestor of the Youngflame clan was surprised.

"Even if he is...the amount of intellect he's able to use right now must be very, very low," Celestial Immortal Infatuation said. "He's like a beast, right now; all he knows to do is to knock away anything dangerous. He doesn't even know to flee! He could've just used his evasive techniques to dodge, but he didn't move at all; from this, one can tell that his intellect has dropped to a very, very low level right now."

"Let's all act together. Perhaps we can trap him."

"Let's give it a shot."

The six Celestial Immortals all moved.

Black chains flew out. Thousands of tendrils and vines whipped out. The strands of an enormous horsetail flywhisk that was thirty thousand meters long flew forth.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Everything in front of Ning was blurry, but he did see many vines swinging towards him. He struggled to wave his arms about, using the [Starseizing Hand] to knock all the magic treasures flying and away from his body. The tendrils all completely snapped apart, unable to even draw near him. After all, these Celestial Immortals were all heavily wounded; when controlling magic treasures from afar, how could their power possibly compare to the power of Ning's twin arms?

Even if the six Celestial Immortals were to use a formation, given how badly injured they were, they still wouldn't be able to withstand Ning's [Starseizing Hand].

"Mmm...he really does seem like a wild beast. Anything that gets close to him, he'll wildly lash out at and knock away." The Youngflame Ancestor nodded lightly. "I have an idea...one that will ensure his death."

“Oh?” They all looked towards the Ancestor, save for Celestial Immortal Infatuation, who suddenly said, “Can it be...the Worldhold Pagoda?”

“Infatuation read my mind.” The Youngflame Ancestor nodded lightly. “Fortunately, when I came out of seclusion this time, Arcanum and the others came over as well. There was no one left to guard the pagoda, and so I brought it over here as well.”

Whoosh.

A small pagoda suddenly appeared within the Youngflame Ancestor’s hands. This was the ancient pagoda which Celestial Immortal Arcanum and the others had been guarding previously. This pagoda...it was truly the most important of all treasures which the Youngflame clan had. To the Youngflame clan, the most important person was naturally the Youngflame Ancestor, Immortal Venomfreak, who had countless clones spread everywhere. Only second to him in importance was this Worldhold Pagoda.

This was a Protocosmic spirit-treasure, the greatest treasure which Immortal Venomfreak had acquired over the course of countless ages.

Whoosh. The small pagoda within the Youngflame Ancestor’s hand flew out, transforming into a pagoda that was thirty thousand meters tall. The pagoda hung high in the air, hovering roughly three thousand meters above him. The Youngflame Ancestor and the others had noticed earlier than three thousand meters seemed to be a limit; once one went beyond that range and moved closer to Ji Ning, Ji Ning would instantly begin to strike and knock things flying.

“Ji Ning...I’ll send you on your way,” the Youngflame Patriarch said softly.

Whoosh. The entire surface of the pagoda suddenly lit up, especially at the base where a giant black vortex suddenly formed. The vortex began to quickly spread outwards, soon covering a region of a hundred kilometers. Naturally, this completely covered the area where Ning was located as well.

Everything within the area was completely drawn in by the whirlpool.

Normally, the quick-witted Ning would've immediately noticed that something was wrong. He would've immediately departed from this region...but Ning was currently clutching his head in utter agony, the karmic sinflames blazing around his body gradually increasing in power. In fact...the second round of punishments was about to descend. The single thought in his mind was to prevent any magic treasures or spells from drawing near his body; how could he possibly have the presence of mind to notice anything else that was amiss?

Rumble...

The pagoda began to glow brighter and brighter.

And then....whoosh!

The very tip of the pagoda suddenly grew blindingly bright. Swish! A streak of light shot from it into the skies, as though piercing through the walls of reality itself...then vanished.

As for the vortex region of a hundred kilometers...it had become completely empty. Ji Ning had completely vanished. He had vanished from the world of the Grand Xia...and in fact, he had even vanished from the Three Realms themselves. He was now outside the Three Realms...

Credits

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